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THE NOVELS AND OTHER WORKS OF

LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYITCH

AND OTHER STORIES

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1899

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INTRODUCTION

THE stories here presented are interesting not only in themselves, but also by reason of the variety in style and subject characterizing them. The "Death of Ivan Ilyitch" is a somber and powerful picture of the insidious progress of a fatal disease as well as a study in religious philosophy. No one can read Count Tolstoï's writings without being struck by the insistent emphasis put on the fact of death. It threatens and hangs over all men, of course; if there is any one thing which is taken for granted, it is that we all must die. But the average man is fortunately as oblivious of this inevitable approach as he is of the action of his vital organs. But with Count Tolstoï the dread of death seems to have been a mighty reality, and he has paused again and again to paint in the most agonizing detail the fatal divorce of life. In his war pictures this is to be expected; but we have death-bed scenes such as that of the old Count Bezukhoï, that of Prince Andreï, that of Nikolaï Levin, and this painful and morbid study of Ivan Ilyitch's lonely and pathetic passage through the Valley of the Shadow. Then in contrast with this comes the story entitled "Three Deaths," where the same tragedy is enacted by a woman of rank, by a rude peasant, and — with a touch of genius — by a tree. Several chapters of Count Tolstoï's treatise on "Life" are devoted to an analysis of the fear of death, and it is evident that he has to a large extent conquered, by his later philosophy, the passionate dread which he confesses hung like a pall over his life.

The short stories which follow were written as tracts for the people, and were in many cases, when published in their separate form, illustrated with quaint woodcuts.

They represent the latest phase in the author's views — an evolution which it is easy to trace from Olyenin in "The Cossacks," through Pierre Bezukhoï in "War and Peace," and Levin in "Anna Karenina," up to the idealized muzhik who earns his bread in the sweat of his brow, does good for evil, makes no resistance to violence, and comes out victorious over every temptation of the grotesque and comical devil and his imps. This form of composition was very likely suggested to Count Tolstoï by the popular tales that have been in vogue in Russia for three or four hundred years.

Such, for example, is the fifteenth-century "Story of Vasarga the Merchant," in which the child Mudro-muisl, or Wise Thought, solves the riddles of the wicked Tsar Nesmian. This *grim* but dull-minded tyrant treats Dmitri Vasarga hospitably; but when the guest, in reply to his question, "What is thy religion?" doughtily replies, "I am of the Christian religion, of the city of Kief, the little merchant Dmitri; and I believe in one God, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," he is given one of these choices: to adopt the false religion of the grim tsar, and have great honor; to solve three riddles, or, if he fail to solve the riddles, and still stand firm, to go to prison and starve to death. Mudro-muisl saves his father's wealth and health. He puts the tyrant to shame, is *elected to the throne by a vote of the people*, who were Christian at heart in spite of their tsar, and, having released from the noisome dungeon the three hundred and thirty starving merchants who had been true to their faith, he establishes free trade, and becomes a prosperous and admirable prince, — a most suggestive and inspiring story for any nation which had lurking desires for democracy. Its moral is simply this: that the ruler of a country, even though he be fortified on the throne with wealth and power, is, nevertheless, at the mercy of a little child who has the wit to control and utilize the sentiment of the whole people.

The story of Vasarga is four centuries old, and Russia has not even a constitution. Will Count Tolstoï's theories of non-resistance and communism, of the bless-

ings of poverty and service, be in practice four hundred years hence?

These stories will be regarded both seriously and as curiosities, for it is impossible not to read between the lines. The only wonder is that the censor who forbade "My Religion" should have allowed the skazka entitled "Ivan the Fool." The implication of criticism on the whole military system of Russia is not even covert. The question of regicide is plainly discussed in "A Candle." Though regicide itself is condemned, it is not dubious who is meant by the "overseer" of the story. Count Tolstoï's whole system of philosophy is concretely revealed in these allegories; it is not necessary here to discuss the strength or weakness of his logic. But there are few who will not be touched by the moral which Count Tolstoï conveys by means of these quaint and curious tales. And there can be no doubt that such a story as "Where Love is there God is also" is a masterpiece of exquisite beauty, certain to achieve immortality.

The style of the original Russian is staccato, abrupt, even crabbed. Connective conjunctions are frequently omitted, and there seems to be a deliberate mixture of tenses, past and present. No attempt has been made to reproduce these peculiarities in English; though the simplicity, which is one of the charms of the folk-tale and of these, is legitimately preserved.

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THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYITCH

(1884-1886)

CHAPTER I

IN the great building of the law-courts, while the proceedings in the Mielvinsky suit were at a standstill, the members of the board and the prokuror met in Ivan Yegorovitch Shebek's private room, and the conversation turned on the famous Krasovsky suit. Feodor Vasilyevitch talked himself into a passion in pointing out the men's innocence; Ivan Yegorovitch maintained his side; but Piotr Ivanovitch, who had not entered into the discussion at first, took no part in it even now, and was glancing over the *Vyedomosti*, which had just been handed to him.

"Gentlemen!" said he, "Ivan Ilyitch is dead!"

"Is it possible?"

"Here! read for yourself," said he to Feodor Vasilyevitch, handing him the paper, which had still retained its odor of freshness.

Heavy black lines inclosed these printed words: —

"*Praskovia Feodorovna Golovina, with heartfelt sorrow, announces to relatives and friends the death of her beloved husband, Ivan Ilyitch Golovin, member of the Court of Appeal,*[1] *who departed this life on the* 16*th February*, 1882. *The funeral will take place on Friday, at one o'clock in the afternoon.*"

Ivan Ilyitch had been the colleague of the gentlemen there assembled, and all liked him. He had been ill

[1] *Sudyebnaya Palata.*

for several weeks, and it was said that his case was incurable. His place was kept vacant for him; but it had been decided that, in case of his death, Alekseyef might be assigned to his place, while either Vinnikof or Schtabel would take Alekseyef's place. And so, on hearing of Ivan Ilyitch's death, the first thought of each of the gentlemen gathered in that room was in regard to the changes and promotions which this death might bring about among the members of the council and their acquaintances.

"Now, surely, I shall get either Schtabel's or Vinnikof's place," was Feodor Vasilyevitch's thought. "It has been promised me for a long time; and this promotion will mean an increase in my salary of eight hundred rubles, besides allowances."

"I must propose right away to have my brother-in-law transferred from Kaluga," thought Piotr Ivanovitch. "My wife will be very glad. Then it will be impossible for her to say that I have never done anything for her relations."

"I have been thinking that he would n't get up again," said Piotr Ivanovitch aloud. "It is too bad."

"But what was really the matter with him?"

"The doctors could not determine. That is to say, they determined it, but each in his own way. When I saw him the last time, it seemed to me that he was getting better."

"But I have n't been to see him since the Christmas holidays. I kept meaning to go."

"Did he have any property?"

"His wife had a very little, I think. But a mere pittance."

"Well, we must go to see her. They live a frightful distance off."

"That is, from you. Everything is far from you!"

"Now, see here! He can't forgive me because I live on the other side of the river," said Piotr Ivanovitch to Shebek, with a smile.

And then they talked about the long distances in cities, till the recess was over.

Over and above the considerations caused by the death of this man, in regard to the mutations and possible changes in the court that might result from it, the very fact of the death of an intimate friend aroused as usual in all who heard about it a feeling of pleasure that "it was he, and not I, who was dead."

Each one said to himself, or felt:—

"Well, he is dead, and I am not."

The intimate acquaintances, the so-called friends, of Ivan Ilyitch could not help having these thoughts, and also felt that now it was incumbent on them to fulfil the very melancholy obligation of propriety, in going to the funeral and paying a visit of condolence to the widow.

Feodor Vasilyevitch and Piotr Ivanovitch had been more intimate with him than the others.

Piotr Ivanovitch had been his fellow in the law-school, and had felt under obligations to Ivan Ilyitch.

Having, at dinner-time, informed his wife of Ivan Ilyitch's death, and his reflections as to the possibility of his brother-in-law's transfer into their circle, Piotr Ivanovitch, not stopping to rest, put on his dress-coat, and drove off to Ivan Ilyitch's.

At the door of Ivan Ilyitch's residence stood a carriage and two izvoshchiks. At the foot of the stairs, in the hallway by the hat-rack, pushed back against the wall, was the brocaded coffin-cover, with tassels and lace full of purified powdered camphor. Two ladies in black were taking off their shubkas. One whom he knew was Ivan Ilyitch's sister; the other lady he did not know. Piotr Ivanovitch's colleague, Schwartz, was just coming down-stairs; and, as he recognized the newcomer, he stopped on the upper step, and winked at him as much as to say:—

"Ivan Ilyitch was a bad manager; you and I understand a thing or two."

Schwartz's face, with its English side-whiskers, and his spare figure under his dress-coat, had, as always, an elegant solemnity; and this solemnity, which was forever contradicted by Schwartz's jovial nature, here had a peculiar piquancy, so Piotr Ivanovitch thought.

Piotr Ivanovitch gave precedence to the ladies, and slowly followed them up-stairs. Schwartz did not make any move to descend, but waited at the landing. Piotr Ivanovitch understood his motive; without doubt, he wanted to make an appointment for playing cards that evening. The ladies mounted the stairs to the widow's room; and Schwartz, with lips gravely compressed and firm, and with mischievous eyes, indicated to Piotr Ivanovitch, by the motion of his brows, the room at the right, where the dead man was.

Piotr Ivanovitch entered, having that feeling of uncertainty, ever present under such circumstances, as to what would be the proper thing to do. But he knew that in such circumstances the sign of the cross never came amiss. As to whether he ought to make a salutation or not, he was not quite sure; and he therefore took a middle course. As he went into the room, he began to cross himself, and, at the same time, he made an almost imperceptible inclination. As far as he was permitted by the motion of his hands and head, he took in the appearance of the room. Two young men, apparently nephews, — one, a scholar at the gymnasium, — were just leaving the room, making the sign of the cross. An old woman was standing motionless; and a lady, with strangely arched eyebrows, was saying something to her in a whisper. A hearty-looking, energetic sacristan[1] in a frock was reading something in a loud voice, with an expression which forbade all objection. The muzhik, Gerasim, who acted as butler, was sprinkling something on the floor, passing slowly in front of Piotr Ivanovitch. As he saw this, Piotr Ivanovitch immediately became cognizant of a slight odor of decomposition.

Piotr Ivanovitch, at his last call on Ivan Ilyitch, had seen this muzhik in the library. He was performing the duties of nurse, and Ivan Ilyitch was extremely fond of him.

Piotr Ivanovitch kept crossing himself, and bowing impartially toward the corpse, the sacristan, and the ikons that stood on a table in the corner. Then, when

[1] *Diachok.*

it seemed to him that he had already continued too long making signs of the cross with his hand, he stopped short, and began to gaze at the dead man.

The dead man lay in the drapery of the coffin, as dead men always lie, a perfectly lifeless weight, absolutely unconscious, with stiffened limbs, with head forever at rest on the pillow; and showing, as all corpses show, a brow like yellow wax, with spots on the sunken temples, and a nose so prominent as almost to press down on the upper lip.

He had greatly changed, and was far more emaciated than when Piotr Ivanovitch had last seen him; but, as in the case of all the dead, his face was more beautiful, especially more dignified, than it had been when he was alive. On his face was an expression signifying that what was necessary to do, that had been done, and had been done in due form. Besides this, there was in his expression a reproach or warning to the living. This warning seemed ill-judged to Piotr Ivanovitch, or at least was not applicable to him. There was something displeasing in it; and therefore Piotr Ivanovitch again crossed himself hastily, and, it seemed to him, too hastily for proper decorum, turned around and went to the door.

Schwartz was waiting for him in the next room, standing with legs wide apart, and with both hands behind his back twirling his "cylinder" hat. Piotr Ivanovitch was cheered by the first glance at Schwartz's jovial, tidy, elegant figure. Piotr Ivanovitch comprehended that Schwartz was superior to these things, and did not give way to these harassing impressions. His appearance alone said: —

The incident of Ivan Ilyitch's funeral cannot serve as a sufficient reason for breaking into the order of exercises of the session; that is to say, nothing shall hinder us this very evening from opening and shuffling a pack of cards while the servant is putting down four fresh candles; in general, there is no occasion to presuppose that this incident can prevent us from having a good time this evening, as well as any other.

He even said this in a whisper to Piotr Ivanovitch as he joined him, and proposed that they meet for a game at Feodor Vasilyevitch's. But evidently it was not Piotr Ivanovitch's fate to play cards that evening.

Praskovia Feodorovna, a short woman, and stout in spite of all her efforts to the contrary, — for her figure grew constantly wider and wider from her shoulders down, — dressed all in black, with lace on her head, and with the same extraordinarily arched eyebrows as the lady who had been standing by the coffin, came out from her rooms with other ladies; and as she preceded them through the door of the death-chamber, she said: —

"Mass will take place immediately. Please come in."

Schwartz, making a slight, indefinite bow, stood still, evidently undecided whether to accept or to decline this invitation. Praskovia Feodorovna, as soon as she recognized Piotr Ivanovitch, sighed, came quite close to him, took him by the hand, and said: —

"I know that you were a true friend of Ivan Ilyitch's." And she fixed her eyes on him, awaiting his action to respond to her words.

Piotr Ivanovitch knew that, just as in the other case it had been incumbent upon him to make the sign of the cross, so here he must press her hand, sigh, and say, "Why, certainly." And so he did. And having done so, he realized that the desired result was obtained, — that he was touched, and she was touched.

"Come," said the widow; "before it begins, I must have a talk with you. Give me your arm."

Piotr Ivanovitch offered her his arm; and they walked along to the inner rooms, passing by Schwartz, who winked compassionately at Piotr Ivanovitch.

His jovial glance said: —

"It 's all up with your game of *vint;* but don't be concerned, we 'll find another partner. We 'll cut in when you have finished."

Piotr Ivanovitch sighed still more deeply and grievously, and Praskovia Feodorovna pressed his arm gratefully.

When they entered her drawing-room, which had hangings of rose-colored cretonne, and was dimly lighted by a lamp, they sat down near a table, — she on a divan, but Piotr Ivanovitch on a low ottoman,[1] the springs of which were out of order, and yielded unevenly under his weight.

Praskovia Feodorovna wanted to suggest to him to take another chair; but to make such a suggestion seemed out of place in her situation, and she gave it up. As he sat down on the ottoman, Piotr Ivanovitch remembered how, when Ivan Ilyitch was decorating that drawing-room, he had asked his opinion about this very same rose-colored cretonne, with its green leaves.

As the widow passed by the table in going to the divan, — the whole room was crowded with ornaments and furniture, — she caught the black lace of her black mantilla on the woodwork. Piotr Ivanovitch got up, in order to detach it; and the ottoman, freed from his weight, began to shake and jostle him. The widow herself was busy disengaging her lace; and Piotr Ivanovitch sat down again, flattening out the ottoman which had rebelled under him. But still the widow could not get free, and Piotr Ivanovitch again arose; and again the ottoman rebelled, and even creaked.

When all this was arranged, she took out a clean cambric handkerchief, and began to weep. The episode with the lace and the struggle with the ottoman had thrown a chill over Piotr Ivanovitch, and he sat with a frown. This awkward situation was interrupted by Sokolof, Ivan Ilyitch's butler, with the announcement that the lot in the graveyard, which Praskovia Feodorovna had selected, would cost two hundred rubles. She ceased to weep, and, with the air of a martyr, looked at Piotr Ivanovitch, saying in French that it was very trying for her. Piotr Ivanovitch made a silent gesture, signifying his undoubted belief that this was inevitable.

"Smoke, I beg of you!" she said with a voice expressive of magnanimity as well as melancholy. And she discussed with Sokolof the price of the lot.

[1] *Puff.*

As Piotr Ivanovitch began to smoke, he overheard how she very circumstantially inquired into the various prices of land, and finally determined on the one which it suited her to purchase. When she had settled upon the lot, she also gave her orders in regard to the singers. Sokolof withdrew.

"I attend to everything myself," she said to Piotr Ivanovitch, moving to one side the albums that lay on the table; and then, noticing that the ashes were about to fall on the table, she hastened to hand Piotr Ivanovitch an ash-tray, and continued: —

"It would be hypocritical for me to declare that grief prevents me from attending to practical affairs. On the contrary, though it cannot console me, yet it may divert my mind from my troubles."

Again she took out her handkerchief, as if preparing to weep; and suddenly, apparently making an effort over herself, she shook herself, and began to speak calmly: —

"At all events, I have some business with you."

Piotr Ivanovitch bowed, not giving the springs of the ottoman a chance to rise up against him, since only the moment before they had been misbehaving under him.

"During the last days, his sufferings were terrible."

"He suffered very much?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch.

"Oh! terribly! For hours before he died he did not cease to shriek. For three days and nights he shrieked all the time. It was unendurable. I cannot understand how I stood it. You could hear him through three doors! Akh! how I suffered!"

"And was he in his senses?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch.

"Yes," she said in a whisper, "to the last moment. He bade us farewell a quarter of an hour before he died, and even asked us to send Volodya out."

The thought of the sufferings of a man whom he had known so intimately, first as a jolly child and schoolboy, and then in adult life as his colleague, suddenly filled Piotr Ivanovitch with terror in spite of the unpleasant sense of this woman's hypocrisy and his own. Once

more he saw that forehead, that nose nipping on the lip, and he felt frightened for himself.

"Three days and nights of horrible sufferings and death! Perhaps this may happen to me also, immediately, at any moment," he said to himself. And for an instant he felt panic-stricken. But immediately, though he himself knew not how, there came to his aid the common idea that this had happened to Ivan Ilyitch, and not to him, and therefore such a thing had no business to happen to him, and could not be possible; that, in thinking so, he had fallen into a melancholy frame of mind, which was a foolish thing to do, as was evident by Schwartz's face.

In the course of these reflections, Piotr Ivanovitch became calm, and began with interest to ask for the details of Ivan Ilyitch's decease, as if death were some accident peculiar to Ivan Ilyitch alone, and absolutely remote from himself.

After speaking at greater or less length of the details of the truly terrible physical sufferings endured by Ivan Ilyitch, — Piotr Ivanovitch listened to these details simply because Praskovia Feodorovna's nerves had been affected by her husband's sufferings, — the widow evidently felt that it was time to come to the point.

"Oh! Piotr Ivanovitch! how painful! how horribly painful! how horribly painful!" and again the tears began to flow.

Piotr Ivanovitch sighed, and waited till she had blown her nose. When she had blown her nose, he said: —

"Believe me...."

And again the springs of her speech were unloosed, and she explained what was apparently her chief object in seeing him: this matter concerned the problem of how she should make her husband's death secure her funds from the treasury.

She pretended to ask Piotr Ivanovitch's advice about a pension; but he clearly saw that she had already mastered the minutest points, even those that he himself knew not, in the process of extracting from the treasury the greatest possible amount in case of death.

But what she wanted to find out, was whether it were not possible to become the recipient of still more money.

Piotr Ivanovitch endeavored to devise some means to this effect; but, having pondered a little, and out of politeness condemned our government for its niggardliness, he said that it seemed to him impossible to obtain more. Then she sighed, and evidently began to devise some means of getting rid of her visitor. He understood, put out his cigarette, arose, pressed her hand, and passed into the anteroom.

In the dinning-room, where stood the clock that Ivan Ilyitch had taken such delight in, when he purchased it at a bric-à-brac shop, Piotr Ivanovitch met the priest and a few more acquaintances who had come to the funeral; and he recognized Ivan Ilyitch's daughter, a pretty young lady, whom he knew. She was all in black. Her very slender figure seemed more slender than usual. She looked melancholy, determined, almost irritated. She bowed to Piotr Ivanovitch as if he were in some way to blame. Behind the daughter, with the same melancholy look, stood a rich young man, a magistrate[1] of Piotr Ivanovitch's acquaintance, who, as he heard, was her betrothed. He bowed to them disconsolately, and was about to pass into the death-chamber, when he saw coming up the stairs the slender form of Ivan Ilyitch's son, — a gymnasium student, and a striking image of Ivan Ilyitch. It was the same little Ivan Ilyitch whom Piotr Ivanovitch remembered at the law-school. His eyes were wet with tears, and had the faded appearance common to unhealthy boys of thirteen or fourteen. The boy, as soon as he saw Piotr Ivanovitch, scowled rudely and bashfully. Piotr Ivanovitch nodded at him, and entered the death-chamber.

The mass had begun; there were candles, groans, incense, tears, and sobs. Piotr Ivanovitch stood looking gloomily down at his feet. He did not once glance at the corpse, and to the end did not yield to the softening influences; and he was one of the first to leave.

[1] *Sudyebnui slyedovatyel.*

There was no one in the anteroom. Gerasim, the butler,[1] rushed from the dead man's late room, tossed about all the fur garments with his strong hands, in order to find Piotr Ivanovitch's shuba, and handed it to him.

"Well, brother Gerasim," said Piotr Ivanovitch, so as to say something, "it's too bad, isn't it?"

"God's will. We shall all be there," said Gerasim, showing his close, white, peasant's teeth; and, like a man earnestly engaged in some great work, he opened the door with alacrity, called the coachman, helped Piotr Ivanovitch into the carriage, and then hastened back up the front steps, as if he were eager to find something else to do.

It was particularly agreeable to Piotr Ivanovitch to breathe the fresh air, after the odor of the incense, of the dead body, and carbolic acid.

"Where shall I drive to?" asked the coachman.

"It's not too late. I'll go to Feodor Vasilyevitch's, after all."

And Piotr Ivanovitch drove off. And, in fact, he found them just finishing the first rubber, so that it was convenient for him to cut in.

CHAPTER II

The past history of Ivan Ilyitch's life was most simple and uneventful, and yet most terrible.

Ivan Ilyitch died at the age of forty-five, a member of the Court of Justice. He was the son of a functionary who had followed, in various ministries and departments at Petersburg, a career such as brings men into a position from which, on account of their long service and their rank, they are never turned adrift, even though it is plainly manifest that their actual usefulness is at an end; and consequently they obtain imaginary, fictitious places, and from six to ten thousand that are not fictitious, on which they live till a good old age.

[1] *Bufetnui muzhik.*

Such had been Ilya Yefimovitch Golovin, privy councilor, a useless member of various useless commissions.

He had three sons; Ivan Ilyitch was the second. The eldest had followed the same career as his father's, but in a different ministry, and was already nearing that period of his service in which inertia carries a man into emoluments. The third son had been a failure. He had completely gone to pieces in several positions, and he was now connected with railways; and his father and his brothers and especially their wives not only disliked to meet him, but, except when it was absolutely necessary, even forgot that he existed.

A sister was married to Baron Gref, who, like his father-in-law, was a Petersburg chinovnik. Ivan Ilyitch had been *le phénix de la famille*, as they used to say. He was neither so chilling and formal as the eldest brother, nor so unpromising as the youngest. He was the mean between them, — an intelligent, lively, agreeable, and polished man. He had studied at the law-school with his younger brother, who did not graduate but was expelled from the fifth class; Ivan Ilyitch, however, finished his course creditably. At the law-school he showed the same characteristics by which he was afterward distinguished all his life: he was capable, good-natured even to gayety, and sociable, but strictly fulfilling all that he considered to be his duty; duty, in his opinion, was all that is considered to be such by men in the highest station. He was not one to curry favor, either as a boy, or afterward in manhood; but from his earliest years he had been attracted by men in the highest station in society, just as a fly is by the light;[1] he adopted their ways, their views of life, and entered into relations of friendship with them. All the passions of childhood and youth had passed away, not leaving serious traces. He had yielded to sensuality and vanity, and, toward the last of his life, to the higher forms of liberalism, but all within certain limits which his nature faithfully prescribed for him.

While at the law-school, he had done some things

[1] In Russian, the word for *light* and *society* is the same.

which hitherto had seemed to him very shameful, and which while he was engaged in them aroused in him deep scorn for himself. But afterward, finding that these things were also done by men of high position, and were not considered by them disgraceful, he came to regard them, not indeed as worthy, but as something to put entirely out of his mind, and he was not in the least troubled by the recollection of them.

When Ivan Ilyitch had graduated from the law-school with the tenth rank,[1] and received from his father some money for his uniform, he ordered a suit of Scharmer, added to his trinkets the little medal with the legend *respice finem*, bade the prince and principal farewell, ate a dinner with his classmates at Donon's, and, furnished with new and stylish trunk, linen, uniform, razors, and toilet articles, and a plaid, ordered or bought at the very best shops, he departed for the province, as chinovnik and private secretary to the governor — a place which his father procured for him.

In the province, Ivan Ilyitch at once got himself into the same sort of easy and agreeable position as his position in the law-school had been. He attended to his duties, pressed forward in his career, and at the same time enjoyed life in a cheerful and circumspect manner. From time to time, delegated by his chief, he visited the districts, bore himself with dignity toward both his superiors and subordinates, and, without overweening conceit, fulfilled with punctuality and incorruptible integrity the duties imposed upon him, preëminently in the affair of the dissenters.[2]

Notwithstanding his youth, and his tendency to be gay and easy-going, he was, in matters of State, thor-

[1] That is, as *Kollyezhski Sekretar*, corresponding to *Shtaps-Kapitan* in the army; the next rank in the *chin* would be titular councilor, — *Titulyarnui Sovyetnik*, — which confers personal nobility.

[2] The first body of *raskolniks*, or dissenters, called the "Old Believers," arose in the time of the Patriarch Nikon, who, in 1654, revised the Scriptures. A quarrel as to the number of fingers to be used in giving the blessing, and the manner of spelling Jesus, seems to have been the chief cause of the *raskol*, or schism. The Greek Church has now to contend with a host of different forms of dissent. — Ed.

oughly discreet, and carried his official reserve even to sternness. But in society he was often merry and witty, and always good-natured, polite, and *bon enfant*, as he was called by his chief and his chief's wife, at whose house he was intimate.

While he was in the province, he had maintained relations with one of those ladies who are ready to fling themselves into the arms of an elegant young lawyer. There was also a dressmaker; and there were occasional sprees with visiting flügel-adjutants, and visits to some out-of-the-way street after supper; he had also the favor of his chief and even of his chief's wife, but everything of this sort was attended with such a high tone of good-breeding that it could not be qualified by hard names; it all squared with the rubric of the French expression, *Il faut que jeunesse se passe.*[1]

All was done with clean hands, with clean linen, with French words, and, above all, in company with the very highest society, and therefore with the approbation of those high in rank.

In this way Ivan Ilyitch served five years, and a change was instituted in the service. The new tribunals were established; new men were needed.

And Ivan Ilyitch was chosen as one of the new men.

He was offered the position of examining magistrate;[2] and accepted it, notwithstanding the fact that this place was in another government, and that he would be obliged to give up the connections he had formed, and form new ones.

Ivan Ilyitch's friends saw him off. They were photographed in a group, they presented him a silver cigarette-case, and he departed for his new post.

As an examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch was just as *comme il faut*, just as circumspect, and careful to sunder the obligations of his office from his private life, and as successful in winning universal consideration, as when

[1] "A man must sow his wild oats."

[2] *Sudyebnui Slyedovatyel;* see Anatole Leroy Beaulieu's "L'Empire des Tsars," vol. ii.

he was a chinovnik with special functions. The office of magistrate itself was vastly more interesting and attractive to Ivan Ilyitch than his former position had been.

To be sure, it used to be agreeable to him, in his former position, to pass with free and easy gait, in his Scharmer-made uniform, in front of trembling petitioners and petty officials, waiting for an interview, and envying him, as he went without hesitation into his chief's private room, and sat down with him to drink a cup of tea, and smoke a cigarette; but the men who had been directly dependent on his pleasure were few, — merely police captains and dissenters,[1] if he were sent out with special instructions. And he liked to meet these men, dependent on him, not only politely, but even on terms of comradeship; he liked to make them feel that he, who had the power to crush them, treated them simply, and like friends. Such men at that time were few.

But now, as examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch felt that all, all without exception, even men of importance, of distinction, all were in his hands, and that all he had to do was to write such and such words on a piece of paper with a heading, and this important, distinguished man would be brought to him in the capacity of accused or witness, and, unless he wished to ask him to sit down, he would have to stand in his presence, and submit to his questions. Ivan Ilyitch never took undue advantage of this power; on the contrary, he tried to temper the expression of it. But the consciousness of this power, and the possibility of tempering it, furnished for him the chief interest and attractiveness of his new office.

In the office itself, especially in investigations, Ivan Ilyitch was very quick to master the process of eliminating all circumstances extraneous to the case, and of disentangling the most complicated details in such a manner that the case would be presented on paper only in its essentials, and absolutely shorn of his own personal opinion, and, last and not least, that every necessary formality would be fulfilled. This was a new mode of

[1] *Ispravniks* and *raskolniks*.

doing things. And he was one of the first to be engaged in putting into operation the code of 1864.

When he took up his residence in the new city, as examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch made new acquaintances and ties; he put himself on a new footing, and adopted a somewhat different tone. He held himself rather aloof from the provincial authorities, and took up with a better circle among the judges and wealthy nobles living in the city; and he adopted a tone of easy-going criticism of the government, together with a moderate form of liberalism and "civilized citizenship." At the same time, though Ivan Ilyitch in no wise diminished the elegance of his toilet, yet he ceased to shave his chin, and allowed his beard to grow as it would.

Ivan Ilyitch's life in the new city also passed very agreeably. The society which *fronded* against the government was good and friendly; his salary was larger than before; and, while he had no less zest in life, he had the additional pleasure of playing whist, a game in which, as he enjoyed playing cards, he quickly learned to excel, so that he was always on the winning side.

After two years of service in the new city Ivan Ilyitch met the lady who became his wife. Praskovia Feodorovna Mikhel was the most fascinating, witty, brilliant young girl in the circle where Ivan Ilyitch moved. In the multitude of other recreations, and as a solace from the labors of his office, Ivan Ilyitch established sportive, easy-going relations with Praskovia Feodorovna.

At the time when Ivan Ilyitch was a chinovnik with special functions, he had been a passionate lover of dancing; but now that he was examining magistrate, he danced only as an occasional exception. He now danced with the idea that, "though I am an advocate of the new order of things, and belong to the fifth class, still, as far as the question of dancing goes, I can at least show that in this respect I am better than the rest."

Thus, it frequently happened that, toward the end of a party, he danced with Praskovia Feodorovna; and it

was principally at the time of these dances, that he made the conquest of Praskovia Feodorovna. She fell in love with him. Ivan Ilyitch had no clearly decided intention of getting married; but when the girl fell in love with him, he asked himself this question: "In fact, why should I not get married?" said he to himself.

The young lady, Praskovia Feodorovna, came of a good family belonging to the nobility,[1] far from ill-favored, had a small fortune. Ivan Ilyitch might have aspired to a more brilliant match, but this was an excellent one. Ivan Ilyitch had his salary; she, he hoped, would have as much more. She was of good family; she was sweet, pretty, and a thoroughly well-bred woman. To say that Ivan Ilyitch got married because he was in love with his betrothed, and found in her sympathy with his views of life, would be just as incorrect as to say that he got married because the men of his set approved of the match.

Ivan Ilyitch took a wife for two reasons: he gave himself a pleasure in taking such a wife; and, at the same time, the people of the highest rank considered such an act proper.

And so Ivan Ilyitch got married.

The wedding ceremony itself, and the first few days of their married life with its connubial caresses, their new furniture, their new plate, their new linen, everything, even the prospects of an increasing family, were all that could be desired. So that Ivan Ilyitch began to think that marriage not only was not going to disturb his easy-going, pleasant, gay, and always respectable life, so approved by society, and which Ivan Ilyitch considered a perfectly natural characteristic of life in general, but was also going to add to it. But from the first months of his wife's pregnancy, there appeared something new, unexpected, disagreeable, hard, and trying, which he could not have foreseen, and from which it was impossible to escape.

His wife, without any motive, as it seemed to Ivan

[1] *Dvorianstvo.*

Ilyitch, *de gaité de cœur*, as he said to himself, began to interfere with the pleasant and decent current of his life; without any cause she grew jealous of him, demanded attentions from him, found fault with everything, and caused him disagreeable and stormy scenes.

At first Ivan Ilyitch hoped to free himself from this unpleasant state of things by the same easy-going and respectable acceptation of life which had helped him in days gone by. He tried to ignore his wife's disposition, and continued to live as before in an easy and pleasant way. He invited his friends, he gave card-parties, he attempted to make his visits to the club or to friends; but his wife began one time to abuse him with rough and energetic language, and continued persistently to scold him each time that he failed to fulfil her demands, having evidently made up her mind not to cease berating him until he was completely subjected to her authority, — in other words, until he would stay at home, and be just as deeply in the dumps as she herself, — a thing which Ivan Ilyitch dreaded above all.

He learned that married life, at least as far as his wife was concerned, did not always add to the pleasantness and decency of existence, but, on the contrary, disturbed it, and that, therefore, it was necessary to protect himself from such interference. And Ivan Ilyitch tried to devise means to this end. His official duties were the only thing that had an imposing effect upon Praskovia Feodorovna; and Ivan Ilyitch, by means of his office, and the duties arising from it, began the struggle with his wife, for the defense of his independent life.

When the child was born, and in consequence of the various attempts and failures to have it properly nursed, and the illnesses, real and imaginary, of both mother and child, wherein Ivan Ilyitch's sympathy was demanded, but which were absolutely foreign to him, the necessity for him to secure a life outside of his family became still more imperative.

According as his wife grew more irritable and exacting, so Ivan Ilyitch transferred the center of his life's burdens more and more into his office. He began to

love his office more and more, and became more ambitious than he had ever been.

Very soon, not longer than a year after his marriage, Ivan Ilyitch came to the conclusion that married life, while affording certain advantages, was in reality a very complicated and burdensome thing, in relation to which, if one would fulfil his duty, that is, live respectably and with the approbation of society, one must work out a certain system, just as in public office.

And such a system Ivan Ilyitch secured in his matrimonial life. He demanded of family life only such conveniences in the way of home dinners, a housekeeper, a bed, as it could furnish him, and, above all, that respectability in external forms which was in accordance with the opinions of society. As for the rest, he was anxious for pleasant amenities; and if he found them, he was very grateful. On the other hand, if he met with opposition and complaint, then he immediately took refuge in the far-off world of his official duties, which alone offered him delight.

Ivan Ilyitch was regarded as an excellent magistrate, and at the end of three years he was appointed deputy-prokuror. His new functions, their importance, the power vested in him of arresting and imprisoning any one, the publicity of his speeches, his success obtained in this field, — all this still more attached him to the service.

Children came; his wife kept growing more irritable and ill-tempered; but the relations which Ivan Ilyitch maintained toward family life made him almost proof against her temper.

After seven years of service in one city, Ivan Ilyitch was promoted to the office of prokuror in another government. They moved; they had not much money, and the place where they went did not suit his wife. Although his salary was larger than before, yet living was more expensive; moreover, two of their children died; and thus family life became still more distasteful to Ivan Ilyitch.

Praskovia Feodorovna blamed her husband for all

the misfortunes that came on them in their new place of abode. Most of the subjects of conversation between husband and wife, especially the education of their children, led to questions which were productive of quarrels, so that quarrels were always ready to break out. Only at rare intervals came those periods of affection which distinguish married life, but they were not of long duration. These were little islands in which they rested for a time; but then again they pushed out into the sea of secret animosity, which expressed itself by driving them farther and farther apart.

This alienation might have irritated Ivan Ilyitch, if he had not considered that it was inevitable; but he now began to look on this situation not merely as normal, but even as the goal of his activity in the family. This goal consisted in withdrawing as far as possible from these unpleasantnesses, or of giving them a character of innocence and respectability; and he attained this end by spending less and less time with his family; but when he was to do so, then he endeavored to guarantee his position by the presence of strangers.

But Ivan Ilyitch's chief resource was his office. In the world of his duties was concentrated all his interest in life. And this interest wholly absorbed him. The consciousness of his power of ruining any one whom he might wish to ruin; the importance of his position manifested outwardly when he came into court or met his subordinates; his success with superiors and subordinates; and, above all, his skill in the conduct of affairs, — and he was perfectly conscious of it, — all this delighted him, and, together with conversations with his colleagues, dinners and whist, filled all his life. Thus, for the most part, Ivan Ilyitch's life continued to flow in its even tenor as he considered that it ought to flow, — pleasantly and respectably.

Thus he lived seven years longer. His eldest daughter was already sixteen years old; still another little child had died; and there remained a lad, the one who was in school, the object of their wrangling. Ivan Ilyitch wanted to send him to the law-school; but Pra-

skovia, out of spite toward him, selected the gymnasium. The daughter studied at home, and made good progress; the lad also was not at all backward in his studies.

CHAPTER III

Thus seventeen years of Ivan Ilyitch's life passed since the time of his marriage. He was already an old prokuror, having declined several transfers in the hope of a still more desirable place, when there occurred unexpectedly an unpleasant turn of affairs which was quite disturbing to his peaceful life.

Ivan Ilyitch had been hoping for the position of president[1] in a university city; but Hoppe got in ahead of him, and obtained the place. Ivan Ilyitch became irritated, began to make recriminations, got into a quarrel with him and his next superior; signs of coolness were manifested toward him, and in the subsequent appointments he was passed over.

This was in 1880. This year was the most trying of Ivan Ilyitch's life. It happened, on the one hand, that his salary did not suffice for his expenses; on the other, that he was forgotten by all, and that what seemed to him a great, an atrocious, injustice toward himself was regarded by others as a perfectly natural thing. Even his father did not think it his duty to come to his aid. He felt that he was abandoned by all his friends, who considered that his position, worth thirty-five hundred rubles a year, was very normal and even fortunate. He alone knew that with the consciousness of the injustice which had been done him, and with his wife's everlasting rasping, and with the debts which began to accumulate, now that he lived beyond his means — he alone knew that his situation was far from normal.

The summer of that year, in order to lighten his expenses, he took leave of absence, and went with his wife to spend the summer at the country place belonging to Praskovia Feodorovna's brother.

[1] *Predsyedatyel.*

In the country, relieved of his official duties, Ivan Ilyitch for the first time felt not only irksomeness, but insupportable anguish; and he made up his mind that it was impossible to live in such a way, and that he must take immediate and decisive steps, no matter what they were.

After a long, sleepless night, which he spent walking up and down the terrace, Ivan Ilyitch decided to go to Petersburg, to bestir himself and to get transferred into another ministry so as to punish *them* who had not known how to appreciate him.

On the next day, notwithstanding all the protests of his wife and brother-in-law, he started for Petersburg.

He wanted only one thing, — to obtain a place worth five thousand a year. He would not stipulate for any special ministry, any special direction, any form of activity. All that he needed was a place, — a place with a salary of five thousand, in the administration, in the banks, on the railways, in the institutions of the Empress Maria, even in the customs service; but the sole condition was the five thousand salary, the sole condition to be relieved from the ministry where they did not know how to appreciate him.

And lo! this trip of Ivan Ilyitch's met with astonishing, unexpected success. At Kursk an acquaintance of his, F. S. Ilyin, came into the first-class carriage, and informed him of a telegram just received by the governor of Kursk to the effect that a change was about to be made in the ministry: in Piotr Ivanovitch's place would be appointed Ivan Semyonovitch.

This probable change, over and above its significance for Russia, had a special significance for Ivan Ilyitch, from the fact that by bringing up a new official, Piotr Petrovitch, and probably his friend Zakhar Ivanovitch, it was in the highest degree favorable for Ivan Ilyitch. Zakhar Ivanovitch was a colleague and friend of Ivan Ilyitch.

In Moscow the tidings were confirmed. And when he reached Petersburg, Ivan Ilyitch sought out Zakhar

Ivanovitch, and obtained the promise of a sure position in his old ministry, — that of justice.

At the end of a week he telegraphed his wife : —

"*Zakhar, in Miller's place ; in the first report shall be appointed.*"

Ivan Ilyitch, thanks to this change of administration, suddenly obtained in his old ministry such an appointment as put him two grades above his colleagues, — five thousand salary, and thirty-five hundred for traveling expenses.

All his grievances against his former rivals and against the whole ministry were forgotten, and Ivan Ilyitch was entirely happy.

Ivan Ilyitch returned to the country, jocund, contented, as he had not been for a long time. Praskovia Feodorovna also brightened up, and peace was reëstablished between them. Ivan Ilyitch related how he was honored by every one in Petersburg ; how all those who had been his enemies were covered with shame and now fawned on him ; how they envied him his position, and especially how dearly every one in Petersburg loved him.

Praskovia Feodorovna listened to this, and made believe that she believed it, and did not contradict him in anything, but only made plans for the arrangement of their new life in the city where they were going. And Ivan Ilyitch had the joy of seeing that these plans were his plans, that they coincided, and that his life, interrupted though it had been, was now about to regain its own character of festive pleasure and decency.

Ivan Ilyitch went back for a short visit only. On the 22d of September he was obliged to assume his duties ; and, moreover, he needed time to get established in his new place, to transport all his possessions from the province, to buy new things, to give orders for still more, — in a word, to install himself as it seemed proper to his mind, and pretty nearly as it seemed proper to Praskovia Feodorovna's ideas.

And now, when all was ordered so happily, and when he and his wife were in accord, and, above all, lived to-

gether but a small portion of the time, they became better friends than they had been since the first years of their married life.

Ivan Ilyitch at first thought of taking his family with him immediately; but the insistence of his sister- and brother-in-law, who suddenly manifested an extraordinary friendliness and brotherly love for Ivan Ilyitch and his family, induced him to depart alone.

Ivan Ilyitch took his departure; and his jocund frame of mind, arising from his success and his reconciliation with his wife, the one consequent upon the other, did not for a moment leave him.

He found admirable apartments, exactly coinciding with the dreams of husband and wife, — spacious, lofty reception-rooms in the old style; a convenient, grandiose library; rooms for his wife and daughter; study-room for his son, — all as if expressly designed for them. Ivan Ilyitch himself took charge of the arrangements. He selected the wall-papers; he bought the furniture, mostly antique, to which he attributed a specially *comme-il-faut* style;[1] hangings and all took form, and took form and approached that ideal which he had established in his conception.

When his arrangements were half completed, they surpassed his expectations. He perceived what a *comme-il-faut*, exquisite, and far from commonplace character all would have when completed. When he lay down to sleep, he imagined his "hall" as it would be. As he looked about his drawing-room, still unfinished, he already saw the fireplace, the screen, the little *étagère*, and those easy-chairs scattered here and there, those plates and saucers on the walls, and the bronzes, just as they would be when all was in place.

He was delighted with the thought of how he should astonish Pasha and Lizanka, who also had such good taste in these things. "They would never look for this. Especially that he would have the thought of going and buying, at such a low price, these old things that gave the whole an extraordinary character of gentility."

[1] *Komilfotny stil.*

In his letters he purposely represented everything worse than it really was — so as to surprise them. All this so occupied him, that even his new duties, much as he enjoyed them, were not so absorbing as he expected. Even while court was in session, he had his moments of abstraction; he was cogitating as to what sort of cornices he should have for his curtains, — straight or matched. He was so interested in this, that often he himself took hold, rearranged the furniture, and even rehung the curtains himself.

One time, when he was climbing on a pair of steps, so as to explain to a dull-minded upholsterer how he wished a drapery to be arranged, he slipped and fell; but, being a strong, dexterous man, he saved himself. He only hit his side on the edge of the frame. He received a bruise, but it quickly passed away. Ivan Ilyitch all this time felt perfectly happy and well. He wrote, "I feel as if I were fifteen years younger."

He expected to finish in September, but circumstances delayed it till the middle of October. But it was all admirable; not only he himself said so, but all who saw it said the same.

In reality, it was exactly what is customary among those people who are not very rich, but who like to ape the rich, and therefore only resemble one another, — silken fabrics, mahogany, flowers, carpets, and bronzes, dark and shining, all that which all people of a certain class affect, so as to be comparable to all people of a certain class. And in his case, there was a greater resemblance, so that it was impossible to single out anything for attention; but still, this to him was something extraordinary.

When he met his family at the railway station, he took them to their apartments, freshly put in order for them; and the lackey, in a white necktie, opened the door into the vestibule, ornamented with flowers; and then they went into the parlor, the library, and ohed and ahed with delight; and he was very happy; he showed them everything, drank in their praises, and shone with satisfaction. On that very evening at tea,

when Praskovia Feodorovna asked him, among other things, how he fell, he laughed, and illustrated in pantomime how he went head over heels, and scared the upholsterer.

"I 'm not a gymnast for nothing. Another man would have been killed, but I just struck myself here a little; when you touch it, it hurts; but it 's already wearing off — it 's a mere bruise."

And they began to live in the new domicile, in which, as always, after one has become fairly established, it was discovered that there was just one room too few; and with their new means, which, as always, lacked a little of being sufficient; about five hundred rubles additional, and it would have been well.

All went extraordinarily well at first, while still their arrangements were not wholly regulated, and there was still much to do, — buying this thing, giving orders for that, rearranging, mending. Although there were occasional disagreements between husband and wife, yet both were so satisfied, and they had so many occupations, that no serious quarrel resulted. Still, when there was nothing left to arrange, they became a trifle bored, and felt that something was lacking; but now they began to form new acquaintances, new habits, and their lives became full.

Ivan Ilyitch spent the morning at court, but returned home to dinner; and at first he was in excellent humor, although sometimes he was a little vexed by something or other in the household management.

Any kind of spot on the table-cloth, on the draperies, any break in the curtain-cords, irritated him. He had taken so much pains in getting things in order, that any kind of harm befalling was painful to him.

But, on the whole, Ivan Ilyitch's life ran on, as in his opinion life ought to run, smoothly, pleasantly, and decently.

He rose at nine o'clock, drank his coffee, read the paper, then donned his uniform, and went down to court. There he instantly got himself into the harness to which he had been so long accustomed, — petitioners,

inquiries at the chancery, the chancery itself, sessions public and administrative. In all this, it was necessary to devise means to exclude all those external concerns of life which forever tend to trespass on the accuracy of conducting official duties; it was necessary that he should tolerate no relations with people except on an official basis; and the cause for such relations must be official, and the relations themselves must be only official.

For example, a man comes, and wants to know something or other. Ivan Ilyitch, as a man apart from his office, cannot have any relations with this man; but if the relationship of this man to the magistrate is such that it can be expressed on letter-head paper, then, within the limits of these relations, Ivan Ilyitch would do all, absolutely all, in his power, and at the same time preserve the semblance of affable, philanthropical relations, — in other words, of politeness. The point where his official life and his private life joined was very strictly drawn. Ivan Ilyitch had a high degree of skill in separating the official side from the other without confounding them; and his long practice and talent gave him such *finesse*, that he sometimes, as a virtuoso, allowed himself, by way of a jest, to confound the humanitarian and his official relations.

This act in Ivan Ilyitch's case was played, not only smoothly, pleasantly, and decently, but also in a virtuoso manner. During the intervals, he smoked, drank tea, talked a little about politics, a little about affairs in general, a little about cards, and more than all about appointments; and when weary, but still conscious of his virtuosity, as of one who has well played his part, like one of the first violins of an orchestra, he went home.

At home the mother and daughter had been receiving or making calls; the son was at the gymnasium, preparing his lessons with tutors; and he learned accurately whatever was taught him in the gymnasium. All was excellent.

After dinner, unless he had guests, Ivan Ilyitch sometimes read some book which was much talked

about; and during the evening he sat down to his work, — that is, read papers, consulted the laws, compared depositions and applied the law to them.

This was neither tedious nor inspiriting. It was tedious when he had the chance to play *vint;* but if there was no *vint*, then it was far better than to sit alone or with his wife.

Very delightful to Ivan Ilyitch were the little dinners to which he invited ladies and gentlemen holding high positions in society; and such entertainments were like the entertainments of people of the same class, just as his drawing-room was like all drawing-rooms.

One evening they even had a party; they danced, and Ivan Ilyitch felt gay, and all was good; only a great quarrel arose between husband and wife about the patties and sweetmeats. Praskovia Feodorovna had her ideas about them; but Ivan Ilyitch insisted on buying them all of an expensive confectioner, and he got a great quantity of patties; and the quarrel was because there was an extra quantity, and the confectioner's bill amounted to forty-five rubles.

The quarrel was sharp and disagreeable, inasmuch as Praskovia Feodorovna called him "Fool! Pig-head!"

And he, putting his hands to his head in his vexation, muttered something about divorce.

But the party itself was gay. The very best society were present; and Ivan Ilyitch danced with the Princess Trufonova, the sister of the well-known founder of the society called "*Unesi tui mayo gore.*"[1]

Ivan Ilyitch's official pleasures were the pleasures of self-love; his pleasures in society were pleasures of vanity; but his real pleasures were the pleasures of playing *vint.* He confessed that, after all, after any disagreeable event befalling his life, the pleasure which, like a candle, glowed brighter than all others, was that of sitting down — four good players, and partners who did not shout — to a game of *vint* — and always four, for it is very bad form to have any one cut in, even though you say, "I like it very much" — and have a

[1] "Take away my sorrow."

reasonable, serious game — when the cards run well, — and then to eat a little supper, and drink a glass of wine. And Ivan Ilyitch used to go to sleep, especially after a game of *vint*, when he had won a little something — a large sum is disagreeable — and feel particularly happy in his mind.

Thus they lived. The circle of their friends consisted of the very best society; men of high position visited them, and young men came.

As far as their views upon the circle of their acquaintance were concerned, husband, wife, and daughter were perfectly unanimous. And tacitly they each in the same way pushed aside, and rid themselves of, certain friends and relatives, — the undesirable kind, who came fawning around them in their drawing-room decorated with Japanese plates on the wall. Very soon these undesirable friends ceased to flutter around them, and the Golovins had only the very best society.

Young men were attracted to Lizanka; and the examining magistrate, Petrishchef, the son of Dmitri Ivanovitch Petrishchef, and the sole heir to his wealth, began to flutter around Liza so assiduously, that Ivan Ilyitch already asked Praskovia Feodorovna whether it would not be a good plan to take them on a troïka-ride together, or arrange some private theatricals.

Thus they lived. And thus all went along in its even course, and all was very good.

CHAPTER IV

All were well. It was impossible to see any symptom of ill-health in the fact that Ivan Ilyitch sometimes spoke of a strange taste in his mouth and an uneasiness in the left side of his abdomen.

But it happened that this unpleasant feeling kept increasing; it did not as yet become a pain, but he was all the time conscious of a dull weight in his side, and of an irritable temper. This irritability, constantly increasing and increasing, began to disturb the pleasant, easy-going,

decent life that had been characteristic of the Golovin family. The husband and wife began to quarrel more and more frequently; and before long their easy, pleasant relations were broken up, and even the decency was maintained under difficulties.

Scenes once more became very frequent. Once more, but quite infrequently, the little islands appeared, on which husband and wife could meet without an explosion. And Praskovia Feodorovna now said, with some justification, that her husband had a very trying disposition. With her peculiar tendency to exaggeration, she declared that he had always had such a horrible disposition, that nothing but her good nature had enabled her to endure it for twenty years.

It was indeed true that now he was the one that began the quarrels. His querulousness began always before dinner, and often, indeed, just as they sat down to eat the soup. Sometimes he noticed that a dish was chipped; sometimes the food did not suit him; now his son rested his elbows on the table; now it was the way his daughter dressed her hair. And he blamed Praskovia Feodorovna for everything. At first Praskovia Feodorovna answered him back, and said disagreeable things to him; but twice, during dinner-time, he broke out into such a fury that she perceived this to be an unhealthy state, which proceeded from the assimilation of his food; and she held her peace; she did not reply, and merely hastened to finish dinner.

Praskovia Feodorovna regarded her meekness as a great merit. As she had made up her mind that her husband had a horrible disposition, and was making her life wretched, she began to pity herself. And the more she pitied herself, the more she detested her husband. She began to wish that he would die; but she could not wish it, because then they would not have his salary any more. And this actually exasperated her still more against him. She regarded herself as terribly unhappy, from the very fact that his death could not relieve her; and she grew bitter, but concealed it; and this concealed bitterness strengthened her hatred of him.

After one scene in which Ivan Ilyitch was particularly unjust, and which he afterward explained on the ground of his irritability being the result of not being well, she told him that, if he was ill, then he ought to take some medicine; and she begged him to go to a famous physician.

He went. Everything was as he expected: everything was done according to the usual way, — the delay; and the pompous, *doctorial* air of importance, so familiar to him, the same as he himself assumed in court; and the tapping and the auscultation; and the leading questions requiring answers predetermined, and apparently not heard; and the look of superlative wisdom which seemed to say, "You, now, just trust yourself to us, and we will do everything; we understand without fail how to manage; everything is done in the same way for any man."

Everything was just exactly as in court. The airs he put on in court for the benefit of those brought before him, the same were assumed by the famous doctor for his benefit.

The doctor said, "Such and such a thing shows that you have such and such a thing in you; but if this is not confirmed according to the investigations of such and such a man, then you must suppose such and such a thing. Now, if we suppose such and such a thing, then" — and so on.

For Ivan Ilyitch, only one question was momentous: Was his case dangerous, or not? But the doctor ignored this inconvenient question. From a doctor's point of view, this question was idle, and deserved no consideration; the only thing to do was to weigh probabilities, — floating kidney, chronic catarrh, appendicitis.[1]

[1] Russian, "Disease of the blind intestine." "The anatomy is so made sometimes that the kidney on each side may be so loose that it is said to be 'floating' or, more rarely, 'wandering.' In three thousand post-mortem examinations, I have seen some three such cases. The kidney, so loose in its position sometimes, by getting in the wrong place disturbs the anatomy elsewhere; and the surgeon cuts down upon it, and fastens it in its proper place. The spleen is very variable in its size, but does not wander. The blind intestine is the 'head' of the large gut just below where the small gut enters it." — Dr. F. FERGUSON *in note to Translator.*

It was not a question about Ivan Ilyitch's life, but there was doubt whether it was floating kidney, or appendicitis; and this doubt the doctor, in Ivan Ilyitch's presence, settled in the most brilliant manner in favor of the appendix, making a reserve in case an analysis of the urine should give new results, and then the case would have to be examined anew.

All this was exactly what Ivan Ilyitch himself had done a thousand times in the same brilliant manner for the benefit of the prisoner at the bar. Thus, even more brilliantly, the doctor made his *résumé*, and with an air of still more joyful triumph gazed down from over his spectacles on the prisoner at the bar. From the doctor's *résumé*, Ivan Ilyitch came to the conclusion that, as far as he was concerned, it was bad; but as far as the doctor, and perhaps the rest of the world, was concerned, it made no difference; but for him it was bad!

And this conclusion struck Ivan Ilyitch with a painful shock, causing in him a feeling of painful pity for himself, and of painful wrath against this physician who showed such indifference to such a vital question.

But he said nothing; then he got up, laid some money on the table, and, with a sigh, said: —

"Probably we sick men often ask you foolish questions," said he; "but, in general, is this trouble serious, or not?"

The doctor gave him a severe glance with one eye, through the spectacles, as if to say: —

"Prisoner at the bar, if you do not confine yourself to the limits of the questions already put to you, I shall be constrained to take measures for having you put out of the audience-chamber."

"I have already told you what I considered necessary and suitable," said the doctor; "a further examination will complete the diagnosis;" and the doctor bowed him out.

Ivan Ilyitch went out slowly, lugubriously took his seat in his sledge, and drove home. All the way he kept repeating what the doctor had said, endeavoring

to translate all those involved scientific phrases into simple language, and find in them an answer to the question, "Is it a serious, very serious, case for me, or is it a mere nothing?"

And it seemed to him that the sense of all the doctor's words indicated a very serious case. The aspect of everything in the streets was gloomy. The izvoshchiks were gloomy; gloomy the houses, the pedestrians; the shops were gloomy. This pain, this obscure, dull pain, which did not leave him for a second, seemed to him, when taken in connection with the doctor's ambiguous remarks, to gather a new and more serious significance. Ivan Ilyitch, with a new sense of depression, now took heed of it.

He reached home, and began to tell his wife. His wife listened, but while he was in the midst of his account, his daughter came in with her hat on; she was ready to go out with her mother. She sat down with evident disrelish to listen to this wearisome tale, but she was not detained long; her mother did not hear him out.

"Well," said she, "I am very glad, for now you will be careful, and take your medicine properly. Give me the prescription, and I will send Gerasim to the apothecary's."

And she went to get dressed.

He could not get a long breath all the time that she was in the room, and he sighed heavily when she went out.

"Well," said he, "perhaps it 's a mere nothing, after all." ....

He began to take his medicine, and to follow the doctor's prescriptions, which were somewhat modified after the urine had been analyzed. But just here it so happened exactly that in this analysis, and in what ought to have followed it, there was some confusion. It was impossible to trace it back to the doctor, but the result was that what the doctor said to him did not take place. Either he had forgotten or neglected or concealed something from him.

But Ivan Ilyitch nevertheless began faithfully to follow the doctor's prescriptions, and in this way at first he found consolation.

Ivan Ilyitch's principal occupation, after he went to consult the doctor, consisted in carefully carrying out the doctor's prescription in regard to hygiene, and taking his medicine, and watching the symptoms of his malady, all the functions of his organism. Ivan Ilyitch became chiefly interested in human disease and human health. When people spoke in his presence of those who were sick, of those who had died, of those who were recuperating, especially from diseases like his own, he would listen, endeavoring to hide his agitation, would ask questions, and make comparisons with his own ailment.

The pain did not diminish, but Ivan Ilyitch compelled himself to feign that he was getting better. And he was able to deceive himself as long as there was nothing to irritate him. But the moment that he had any disagreeable scene with his wife, any failure at court, a bad hand at *vint*, then he instantly felt the full force of his malady; formerly he endured these reverses, hopefully saying to himself: —

"Now I shall straighten out this wretched business, shall conquer, shall attain success, win the next hand."

But now every little failure cut him down, and plunged him in despair. He said to himself: —

"Here I was just beginning to get a little better, and the medicine was already helping me, and here this cursed bad luck or this unpleasantness .... "

And he would break out against his bad luck, or against the people that brought him unpleasantness, and were killing him; and he realized how this fit of anger was killing him, but he could not control it.

It would seem that it must be clear to him that these fits of anger against circumstances and people made his malady worse, and that, therefore, he ought not to notice disagreeable trifles; but he reasoned in precisely the opposite way: he said that he needed quiet; he was on the watch for everything which disturbed this

quiet, and at every least disturbance his irritation broke out.

His condition was rendered worse by the fact that he read medical works, and consulted doctors. The progress of his disease was so gradual that he was able to deceive himself by comparing one evening with the next; there was little difference. But when he consulted the doctors, then it seemed to him that it was growing worse, and very rapidly also. And notwithstanding that he constantly consulted doctors.

During this month he went to another celebrity; the second celebrity said pretty much the same as the first had said, but he asked questions in a different way. And the consultation with this celebrity redoubled Ivan Ilyitch's doubt and fear.

A friend of a friend of his — a very good doctor — gave an absolutely different definition of his malady; and, notwithstanding the fact that he predicted recovery, his questions and hypotheses still further confused Ivan Ilyitch, and increased his doubts.

A homeopathist defined his disease in a still different manner, and gave him some pellets; and Ivan Ilyitch, without being suspected by any one, took them for a week. But at the end of the week, not perceiving that any relief came of them, and losing faith, not only in this, but in his former methods of treatment, he fell into still greater melancholy.

One time a lady of his acquaintance was telling him about cures effected by means of ikons. Ivan Ilyitch surprised himself by listening attentively, and believing in the reality of the fact. This circumstance frightened him.

"Is it possible that I have reached such a degree of mental weakness?" he asked himself. "Nonsense! All rubbish! One must not give way to mere fancies. Now I'm going to select one physician, and rigorously follow his advice. That's what I will do. That's the end of it. I will not bother my brain, and till summer I will strictly carry out his prescription; and then the result will be seen. Now for an end to these hesitations." ....

It was easy to say this, but impossible to carry it out. The pain in his side kept troubling him, kept growing if anything worse, became incessant; the taste in his mouth became always more and more peculiar; it seemed to him that his breath was disagreeable, and that he was all the time losing his appetite and strength.

It was impossible to deceive himself; something terrible, novel, and significant, more significant than anything which had ever happened before to Ivan Ilyitch, was taking place in him. And he alone was conscious of it; those who surrounded him did not comprehend it, or did not wish to comprehend it, and thought that everything in the world was going on as before.

This more than aught else pained Ivan Ilyitch. His family, — especially his wife and daughter, who were in the very white-heat of social pleasures, — he saw, did not comprehend at all, were vexed with him because he was gloomy and exacting, as if he were to blame for it. Even though they tried to hide it, he saw that he was in their way, but that his wife had definitely made up her mind in regard to his trouble, and stuck to it, no matter what he might say or do.

This mental attitude was expressed in some such way as this: —

"You know," she would say to an acquaintance, "Ivan Ilyitch, like all easy-going men, can't carry out the doctor's prescriptions strictly. One day he will take his drops, and eat what is ordered for him, and go to bed in good season; then all of a sudden, if I don't look out, he will forget to take his medicine, will eat sturgeon, — though it is forbidden, — yes, and sit up at *vint* till one o'clock."

"Well, now, when?" asks Ivan Ilyitch, with asperity. "Just once at Piotr Ivanovitch's."

"And last evening with Shebek."

"All right, — I could not sleep from pain." ....

"Yes, no matter what it comes from; only you will never get over it in this way, and will keep on tormenting us."

Praskovia Feodorovna's settled conviction in regard to his ailment, — and she impressed it on every one, and on Ivan Ilyitch himself, — was that he was to blame for it, and that his whole illness was a new affliction which he was causing his wife. Ivan Ilyitch felt that this was involuntary on her part, but it was not on that account any easier for him to bear it.

In court Ivan Ilyitch noticed, or thought he noticed, the same strange behavior toward him; now it seemed to him that he was regarded as a man who was soon to give up his place; again, his friends would suddenly begin to rally him about his low spirits, as if this horrible, strange, and unheard-of something that was breeding in him and ceaselessly sucking up his vitality, and irresistibly dragging him away, were a pleasant subject for raillery! Schwartz especially irritated him with his jocularity, his lively ways, and his *comme-il-faut-ness*, reminding Ivan Ilyitch of himself as he had been ten years before.

Friends came in to have a game of cards. They sat down, they dealt, new cards were shuffled, diamonds were thrown on diamonds, — seven of them. His partner said, "No trumps," and held up two diamonds. What more could be desired? It ought to have been a gay proud moment, — a clean sweep.[1]

And suddenly Ivan Ilyitch was conscious of that living pain, of that taste in his mouth, and it seemed to him barbarous that he should be able thus to rejoice in this hand. He looked at Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch, his partner, as he rapped the table with his big red hand, and courteously and condescendingly refrained from gathering up the tricks, but pushed them over to Ivan Ilyitch that he might have the pleasure of counting them, without inconveniencing himself, without putting his hand out.

"What! does he think that I am so weak that I can't put my hand out?" said Ivan Ilyitch to himself; then he forgot what were trumps; trumped his partner's trick, and lost the sweep by three points. And what

[1] *Shlem*, English "slam."

was more terrible than all was that he saw how Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch suffers, and yet to him it was a matter of indifference. And it was terrible to think why it was a matter of indifference to him.

All could see that it was hard for him, and they said to him: —

"We can stop playing if you are tired. You rest awhile." ....

Rest? No, he was not tired at all; they would finish the rubber. All were gloomy and taciturn. Ivan Ilyitch felt that he was the cause of their gloominess, and he could not enliven it. They had supper, and then went home; and Ivan Ilyitch was left alone, with the consciousness that his life is poisoned for him, and that he is poisoning the lives of others, and that this poison is not growing weaker, but is always working its way deeper and deeper into his being.

And with this consciousness, sometimes also with physical pain, sometimes with terror, he would have to go to bed, and frequently not sleep from anguish the greater part of the night. And in the morning he would have to get up again and dress and go to court and speak, write, and, unless he went out to ride, stay at home for those twenty-four hours, each one of which was a torture. And he had to live thus on the edge of destruction — alone, without any one to understand him and pity him.

CHAPTER V

Thus passed one month and two.

Before New Year's his brother-in-law came to their city, and stopped at their house. Praskovia Feodorovna had gone out shopping. Ivan Ilyitch was in court. When he came home, and went into his library, he found his brother-in-law there, a healthy, sanguine man, engaged in opening his trunk. He raised his head as he heard Ivan Ilyitch's steps, and looked at him a moment in silence. This look revealed all to Ivan

Ilyitch. His brother-in-law opened his mouth to exclaim at him, and refrained. This motion confirmed everything.

"What? Have I changed?"

"Yes .... there is a change."

And whenever afterward Ivan Ilyitch tried to bring the conversation round to the subject of his external appearance, his brother-in-law avoided it. Praskovia Feodorovna came in and his brother-in-law went to her room. Ivan Ilyitch locked the door, and began to look at himself in the glass, first front face, then his profile. He took his portrait painted with his wife, and compared it with what he saw in the mirror. The change was portentous. Then he bared his arm to the elbow, looked at it, pulled down his sleeve, sat down on the otomanka, and it became darker than night.

"It must not .... it must not be!" said he to himself; jumped up, went to the table, unfolded a document, began to read it, but could not. He opened the door, went out into the "hall." The drawing-room door was shut. He tiptoed up to it, and began to listen.

"No, you exaggerate," Praskovia Feodorovna was saying.

"How do I exaggerate? Isn't it plain to you? He's a dead man. Look at his eyes, no light in them. .... But what's the matter with him?"

"No one knows. Nikolayef"—that was another doctor—"says one thing, but I don't know about it. Leshchititsky"—that was the famous doctor—"says the opposite." ....

Ivan Ilyitch turned away, went to his room, lay down, and began to think: "Kidney—a floating kidney!"

He recalled all that the doctors had told him,—how it was torn away, and how it was loose. And by an effort of his imagination he endeavored to catch this kidney, to stop it, to fasten it. "It is such a small thing to do," it seemed to him.

"No; I will make another visit to Piotr Ivanovitch."

This was the friend whose friend was a doctor.

He rang, ordered the horse to be harnessed, and got ready to go out.

"Where are you going, *Jean?*" asked his wife, with a peculiarly gloomy and unusually gentle expression.

This unusually gentle expression angered him. He looked at her grimly.

"I have got to go to Piotr Ivanovitch's."

He went to the friend whose friend was a doctor. They went together to this doctor's. He found him and had a long talk with him.

As he examined the anatomical and physiological details of what, according to the doctor, was taking place in him, he comprehended it perfectly.

There was one more trifle — the least bit of a trifle in the vermiform appendix. All that could be put to rights. Strengthen the force of one organ, weaken the activity of another — assimilation ensues, and all is set to rights.

He was a little late to dinner. He ate heartily, he talked gayly, but for a long time he was not able to make up his mind to go to work.

At last he went to his library, and immediately sat down to his labors. He read his documents, and labored over them; but he did not get rid of the consciousness that he had before him an important, private duty, which he must carry out to a conclusion.

When he had finished with his documents, he remembered that this private duty was the thought about the vermiform appendix. But he did not give in to it; he went to the drawing-room to tea. They had callers; there was conversation, there was playing on the pianoforte, and singing; the examining magistrate, the desirable match for their daughter, was there. Ivan Ilyitch spent the evening, as Praskovia Feodorovna observed, more cheerfully than usual; but he did not for a moment forget that he had before him those important thoughts about the vermiform appendix.

At eleven o'clock he bade his friends good-night, and retired to his own room. Since his illness began, he had slept alone in a little room off the library. He

went to it, undressed, and took a romance of Zola's; but he did not read it; he thought. And in his imagination the longed-for cure of the vermiform appendix took place. Assimilation, secretion, were stimulated; regulated activity was established.

"Yes, it is just exactly so," said he to himself. "It is only necessary to help nature."

He remembered his medicine, got up, took it, lay on his back, waiting for the medicine to have its beneficent effect, and gradually ease his pain.

"Only take it regularly, and avoid unhealthy influences; even now I feel a little better, considerably better."

He began to punch his side; it was not painful to the touch.

"No, I don't feel it.... already I feel considerably better."

He blew out the candle, and lay on his side. .... "The vermiform appendix becomes regulated, is absorbed...."

And suddenly he began to feel the old, well-known, dull, lingering pain, stubborn, silent, serious; in his mouth the same well-known taste. His heart sank within him; his brain was in a whirl.

"My God! my God!" he cried, "again, again! and it will never cease!"

And suddenly the trouble presented itself to him absolutely in another guise.

"The vermiform appendix! the kidney!" he said to himself. "The trouble lies, not in the blind intestine, not in the kidney.... but in life.... and death! Yes, once there was life; but now it is passing away, passing away, and I cannot hold it back. Yes. Why deceive one's self? Is it not evident to every one, except myself, that I am going to die? and it is only a question of weeks, of days.... maybe instantly. It was light, but now darkness..... Now I was here, but then I shall be there! Where?"

A chill ran over him, his breathing ceased. He heard only the thumping of his heart.

"I shall not be, but what will be? There will be nothing. Then, where shall I be when I am no more? Will that be death? No, I will not have it!"

He leaped up, wished to light the candle, fumbled about with trembling hands, knocked the candle and candlestick to the floor, and again fell back on the pillow.

"Wherefore? It is all the same," he said to himself, gazing into the darkness with wide-open eyes.

"Death! Yes, death! And *they* know nothing about it, and wish to know nothing about it; and they do not pity me. They are playing." — He heard through the door the distant sound of voices and *ritornelles*. — "To them it is all the same .... and they also will die. Little fools! I first, and they after me. It will be their turn also. But they are enjoying themselves! Cattle!"

Anger choked him, and he felt an insupportably heavy burden of anguish.

"It cannot be that all men have been exposed to this horrible terror."

He lifted himself once more.

"No, it is not so at all. I must calm myself; I must think it all over from the beginning."

And here he began to reflect: —

"Yes, the beginning of the trouble. I hit my side, and I was just the same as before, one day and the next, only a little ache, then more severe, then the doctor, then low spirits, anxiety, the doctor again. And I am all the time coming nearer and nearer to the abyss. Less strength. Nearer, nearer! And how wasted I am! I have no light in my eyes. And death .... and I thinking about the intestine! I am thinking only how to cure my intestine; but this is death! — Is it really death?"

Again fear fell on him. He panted, bent over, tried to find the matches, hit his elbow against the table. It hindered him, and hurt him; he lost his patience, pushed angrily against it with more violence, and tipped it over. And in despair, all out of breath, he fell back, expecting death instantly.

At this time the visitors were going. Praskovia

Feodorovna was showing them out. She heard the table fall, and came in.

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing .... I unintentionally knocked it over."

She went out, and brought in a candle. He was lying, breathing heavily, and quickly, like a man who has just run a verst; his eyes were staring at her.

"What is it, *Jean?*"

"No-o-thing. I .... knock-ed .... over. .... Why say anything? she will not understand," he thought.

She did not in the least understand. She picked up the table, lighted the candle for him, and hurried out. She had to say good-night to her company.

When she came back, he was still lying on his back, looking up.

"What is the matter? Are you worse?"

"Yes."

She shook her head, and sat down.

"Do you know, *Jean*, I think we had better send for Leshchititsky? don't you?"

That meant, send for the celebrated doctor, and not mind the expense. He smiled bitterly, and said:—

"No."

She sat a moment, then came to him, and kissed him on the forehead.

He abhorred her, with all the strength of his soul, at that moment when she kissed him; and he had to restrain himself from pushing her away.

"Good-night![1] God give you pleasant sleep!"

"Yes."

CHAPTER VI

Ivan Ilyitch saw that he was going to die, and he was in perpetual despair.

In the depths of his soul, he knew that he was going to die; but he not only failed to get used to the thought, but also simply did not comprehend it, could not comprehend it.

[1] *Proshchaï.*

This form of syllogism, which he had studied in Kiziveter's "Logic," — "Kaï[1] is a man, men are mortal, therefore Kaï is mortal," — had seemed to him all his life true only in its application to Kaï, but never to himself. It was Kaï as man, as man in general, and in this respect it was perfectly correct; but he was not Kaï, and not man in general, and he had always been an entity absolutely, absolutely distinct from all others; he had been Vanya with mamma and papa, with Mitya and Volodya,[2] with his playthings, the coachman, with the nurse; then with Katenka, with all the joys, sorrows, enthusiasms of childhood, boyhood, youth.

Was it Kaï who smelt the odor of the little striped leather ball that Vanya had loved so dearly? Was it Kaï who had kissed his mother's hand? and was it for Kaï that the silken folds of his mother's dress had rustled so pleasantly? Was it he who made a conspiracy for the tarts at the law-school? Was it Kaï who had been so deeply in love? Was it Kaï who had such ability in conducting the sessions?

"And Kaï is certainly mortal, and it is proper that he should die; but for me, Vanya, Ivan Ilyitch, with all my feelings, my thoughts, — for me, that is another thing, and it cannot be that I must take my turn and die. That would be too horrible."

This was the way that he felt about it: —

"If I were going to die, like Kaï, then, surely, I should have known it; some internal voice would have told me; but nothing of the sort happened in me, and I myself, and my friends, all of us, have perceived that it was absolutely different in our case from what it was with Kaï. But now how is it?" he said to himself. "It cannot be, it cannot be, but it is! How is this? How understand it?"

And he could not understand it; and he endeavored to put away this thought as false, unjust, unwholesome, and to supplant it with other thoughts true and wholesome. But this thought, not merely as a thought, but,

[1] The typical being in logic, like our A. *Kaï* means "word."
[2] Diminutions respectively of Ivan, Dmitri, and Vladimir.

as it were, a reality, kept recurring and taking form before him.

And he summoned in place of this thought other thoughts, one after the other, in the hope of finding succor in them. He strove to return to his former course of reasoning, which hid from him of old the thought of death. But, strangely enough, all that which formerly hid, concealed, destroyed the image of death, was now incapable of producing that effect.

Ivan Ilyitch came to spend the larger part of his time in these attempts to restore the former current of feeling which put death out of sight. Sometimes he said to himself: —

"I will take up my duties again; they certainly kept me alive."

And he went to court, driving away every sort of doubt. He joined his colleagues in conversation, and sat down, according to his old habit, pensively looking with dreamy eyes on the throng, and resting his two emaciated hands on the arms of his oak chair, leaning over, just as usual, toward his colleague, running through the brief, whispering his comments; and then, suddenly lifting his eyes, and sitting straight, he pronounced the well-known words, and began business.

But suddenly, right in the midst of it, the pain in his side, entirely disregarding the time of public business, began its simultaneous business. Ivan Ilyitch perceived it, tried to turn his thoughts from it; but it took its course, and DEATH[1] came up and stood directly before him, and gazed at him: and he was stupefied; the fire died out in his eyes, and he began once more to ask himself: —

"Is there nothing true save IT?"

And his colleagues and subordinates saw with surprise and concern that he, this brilliant, keen judge, was confused, was making mistakes.

He shook himself, tried to collect his thoughts, and in a way conducted the session till it adjourned, and then returned home with the melancholy consciousness

[1] *Ona*, "she"; that is, death, or the thought of death.

that he no longer had the ability, as of old, to separate between his judicial acts and what he wished to put out of his thoughts; that even in the midst of his judicial acts, he could not deliver himself from IT. And what was worse than all, was the fact that IT distracted his attention, not to make him do anything, but only to make him look at IT, straight in the eye, — look at IT, and, though doing nothing, suffer beyond words.

And, while attempting to escape from this state of things, Ivan Ilyitch sought relief, sought other shelter; and other aids came along, and for a short time seemed to help him; but immediately they not so much failed, as grew transparent, as if IT became visible through all, and nothing could hide it.

It happened in this latter part of the time that he went into the drawing-room which he had decorated, — that very drawing-room where he had met with the fall, for which he — as he had to think with bitterness and scorn — for the decoration of which he had sacrificed his life; because he knew that his malady began with that bruise: he went in, and saw that on the varnished table was a scratch, cut by something. He sought for the cause of it, and found it in the bronze decoration of an album, which was turned up at the edge. He took the precious album, lovingly filled by him, and broke out in a passion against the carelessness of his daughter and her friends, who destroyed things so, who dog-eared photographs. He put this carefully to rights, and bent back the ornament.

Then the idea occurred to him to transfer this *établissement*,[1] albums and all, to the other corner, where the flowers were. He summoned a servant. Either his wife or his daughter came to his help; they did not agree with him; they argued against the change: he argued, he lost his temper; but everything was good, because he did not think about IT, IT did not appear.

But here, as he himself was beginning to shift the things, his wife said: —

[1] In French in the original.

"Hold on! the men will attend to that; you will strain yourself again."

And suddenly IT gleamed through the shelter; he saw IT. IT gleamed; he was already hoping that IT had disappeared, but involuntarily he watched for the pain in his side — there it was, all the time, always making its advance; and he could not forget it, and IT clearly gazed at him from among the flowers. What was the purpose of it all?

"And it is true that here I have lost my life on that curtain as in a charge! Is it possible? How horrible and how ridiculous! It cannot be! It cannot be! but it is."

He went back to his library, went to bed, and found himself again alone with IT. Face to face with IT. But to do anything with IT — impossible! Only to look at IT, and grow chill!

CHAPTER VII

How it came about in the third month of Ivan Ilyitch's illness, it was impossible to say, because it came about step by step, imperceptibly; but it came about that his wife and daughter, and his son and the servants, and his acquaintances and the doctors, and chiefly he himself, knew that all the interest felt in him by others was concentrated in this one thing, — how soon he would vacate his place, would free the living from the constraint caused by his presence, and be himself freed from his sufferings.

He slept less and less; they gave him opium, and began to try hypodermic injections of morphine. But this did not relieve him. The dull distress which he experienced in his half-drowsy condition at first merely afforded the relief of change; but soon it came back as severe as ever, or even more intense than open pain.

They prepared for him special dishes, according to the direction of the physicians; but these dishes became ever more and more tasteless, more and more repugnant to him.

Special arrangements also had been made, so that he might perform the wants of nature; and each time it became more trying for him. The torture came from the uncleanliness, the indecency, of it, and the ill odor, from the knowledge that he required the assistance of another.

But from this very same disagreeable circumstance Ivan Ilyitch drew a consolation. His butler, the muzhik Gerasim, always came to set things to rights.

Gerasim was a clean, ruddy young muzhik, who had grown stout in waiting on the table in the city houses. He was always festive, always serene. From the very first, the sight of this man, always so neatly attired in his Russian costume, engaged in this repulsive task, made Ivan Ilyitch ashamed.

One time, after he had got up and was feeling too weak to lift his pantaloons, he threw himself into an easy-chair and was contemplating with horror his bare thighs with their strangely flabby muscles standing out.

Gerasim came in with light, buoyant steps, in thick boots, diffusing an agreeable odor of tar from his boots, and the freshness of the winter air. He wore a clean hempen apron and a clean cotton shirt, with the cuffs rolled up on his bare, strong young arms; and, not looking at Ivan Ilyitch, evidently curbing the joy in life which shone in his face, so as not to offend the sick man, he began to do his work.

"Gerasim," said Ivan Ilyitch, in a weak voice.

Gerasim started, evidently fearing that he had failed in some duty, and turned toward the sick man his fresh, good, simple young face, on which the beard was only just beginning to sprout.

"What can I do for you?"

"This, I am thinking, is disagreeable to you. Forgive me. I cannot help it."

"Do not mention it."[1] And Gerasim's eyes shone, and he showed his white young teeth. "Why should I not do you this service? It is for a sick man."

And with expert, strong hands, he fulfilled his wonted

[1] *Pomiluïte-s.*

task and went out with light steps. After five minutes he returned, still walking with light steps. He had made everything clean and sweet.

Ivan Ilyitch was still sitting in his arm-chair.

"Gerasim," he said, "be good enough to assist me. Come here."

Gerasim went to him.

"Lift me up. It is hard for me alone, and I sent Dmitri away."

Gerasim went to him. In just the same way as he walked, he lifted him with his strong arm, deftly, gently, and held him. With his other hand he adjusted his clothing, and then was about to let him sit down. But Ivan Ilyitch requested him to help him to the divan. Gerasim, without effort, and exercising no sensible pressure, supported him, almost carrying him, to the divan, and set him down.

"Thank you. How easily, how well, you do it all!"

Gerasim again smiled, and was about to go. But Ivan Ilyitch felt so good with him, that he wanted him to stay.

"Wait! Please bring me that chair.... no; that one there. Put it under my feet. It is easier for me when my feet are raised."

Gerasim brought the chair, put it down noiselessly, arranged so that it sat even on the floor, and put Ivan Ilyitch's legs on the chair. It seemed to Ivan Ilyitch that he felt more comfortable while Gerasim was holding up his legs.

"It is better when my legs are up," said Ivan Ilyitch. "Bring me that cushion."

Gerasim did this. Again he lifted his legs, and arranged it all. Again Ivan Ilyitch felt better while Gerasim was holding his legs. When he put them down, he felt worse.

"Gerasim," said he, "are you busy just now?"

"Not at all,"[1] said Gerasim, having learned of city people how to speak with gentlefolk.

"What more have you to do?"

[1] *Nikak-nyet-s.*

"What more have I to do? Everything has been done, except splitting wood against to-morrow."

"Then, hold my legs a little higher, can you?"

"Why not? Of course I can!"

Gerasim lifted his legs higher, and it seemed to Ivan Ilyitch that in this position he felt no pain at all.

"But how about the wood?"

"Don't be worried about that. We shall have time enough."

Ivan Ilyitch bade Gerasim to sit down and hold his legs, and he talked with him. And, strangely enough, it seemed to him that he felt better while Gerasim was holding his legs.

From that time forth Ivan Ilyitch would sometimes call Gerasim, and make him hold his legs on his shoulders, and he liked to talk with him. Gerasim did this easily, willingly, simply, and with a goodness of heart which touched Ivan Ilyitch. In all other people, good health, strength, and vigorous life affronted Ivan Ilyitch; but Gerasim's strength and vigorous life did not affront Ivan Ilyitch, but calmed him.

Ivan Ilyitch's chief torment was a lie, — the lie somehow accepted by every one, that he was only sick, but not dying, and that he needed only to be calm, and trust to the doctors, and then somehow he would come out all right. But *he* knew that, whatever was done, nothing would come of it, except still more excruciating anguish and death. And this lie tormented him; it tormented him that they were unwilling to acknowledge what all knew as well as he knew, but preferred to lie to him about his terrible situation, and made him also a party to this lie. This lie, this lie, it clung to him, even to the very evening of his death; this lie, tending to reduce the strange, solemn act of his death to the same level as visits, curtains, sturgeon for dinner — it was horribly painful for Ivan Ilyitch. And strange! many times, when they were playing this farce for his benefit, he was within a hair's-breadth of shouting at them: —

"Stop your foolish lies! you know as well as I know that I am dying, and so at least stop lying."

But he never had the spirit to do this. The strange, terrible act of his dissolution, he saw, was reduced by all who surrounded him to the grade of an accidental unpleasantness, often unseemly — when he was treated as a man who should come into the drawing-room and diffuse about him a bad odor — and contrary to those principles of "propriety" which he had served all his life. He saw that no one pitied him, because no one was willing even to appreciate his situation. Only Gerasim appreciated his situation, and pitied him. And, therefore, Ivan Ilyitch was contented only when Gerasim was with him.

He was contented when Gerasim for whole nights at a time held his legs, and did not care to go to sleep, saying: —

"Don't you trouble yourself, Ivan Ilyitch; I shall get sleep enough."

Or when suddenly, using *thou* instead of *you*, he would add: —

"If thou wert not sick.... but since thou art, why not serve thee?"

Gerasim alone did not lie: in every way it was evident that he alone comprehended what the trouble was, and thought it unnecessary to hide it, and simply pitied his sick barin, who was wasting away. He even said directly when Ivan Ilyitch wanted to send him off to bed: —

"We shall all die. Then, why should I not serve you?" he said, meaning by this that he was not troubled by his extra work, for precisely the reason that he was doing it for a dying man, and he hoped that, when his time came, some one would undertake the same service for him.

Besides this lie, or in consequence of it, Ivan Ilyitch felt the greatest torment from the fact that no one pitied him as he longed for them to pity him. At some moments after long agonies he yearned more than all — although he would have been the last to confess it — he yearned for some one to pity him as a sick child is pitied. He longed to be caressed, to be kissed, to be wept for,

as a child is caressed and comforted. He knew that he was a magistrate of importance, that his beard was turning gray, and that hence it was impossible; but nevertheless he longed for it. And in his relations with Gerasim there was something that approached this. And, therefore, his relations with Gerasim comforted him.

Ivan Ilyitch would have liked to weep, would have liked to be caressed, and have tears shed for him; and here came his colleague, the member Shebek, and, instead of weeping and being caressed, Ivan Ilyitch puts on a serious, stern, melancholy expression of countenance, and with all his energy speaks his opinions concerning the significance of a judgment of cassation, and obstinately stands up for it.

This lie surrounding him, and existing in him, more than all else poisoned Ivan Ilyitch's last days.

CHAPTER VIII

It was morning.

It was morning merely because Gerasim had gone, and Piotr, the lackey, had come. He put out the candles, opened one curtain, and began noiselessly to put things to rights. Whether it were morning, whether it were evening, Friday or Sunday, all was a matter of indifference to him, all was one and the same thing. The agonizing, shooting pain, never for an instant appeased; the consciousness of a life hopelessly wasting away, but not yet departed; the same terrible, cursed death coming nearer and nearer, the one reality, and always the same lie, — what matter, then, here, of days, weeks, and hours of the day?

"Will you not have me bring the tea?"

"He must follow form, and that requires masters to take tea in the morning," he thought; and he said merely: —

"No."

"Would n't you like to go over to the divan?"

"He has to put the room in order, and I hinder him; I am uncleanness, disorder!" he thought to himself, and said merely:—

"No; leave me!"

The lackey still bustled about a little. Ivan Ilyitch put out his hand. Piotr officiously hastened to him:—

"What do you wish?"

"My watch."

Piotr got the watch, which lay near by, and gave it to him.

"Half-past eight. They are n't up yet?"

"No one at all. Vasili Ivanovitch"—that was his son—"has gone to school, and Praskovia Feodorovna gave orders to wake her up if you asked for her. Do you wish it?"

"No, it is not necessary.—Shall I not try the tea?" he asked himself. "Yes.... tea.... bring me some."

Piotr started to go out. Ivan Ilyitch felt terror-stricken at being left alone. "How can I keep him? Yes, my medicine. Piotr, give me my medicine.—Why not? perhaps the medicine may help me yet."

He took the spoon, sipped it.

"No, there is no help. All this is nonsense and delusion," he said, as he immediately felt the familiar, mawkish, hopeless taste.

"No, I cannot have any faith in it. But this pain, ... why this pain? Would that it might cease for a minute!"

And he began to groan. Piotr came back.

"Nothing .... go! Bring the tea."

Piotr went out. Ivan Ilyitch, left alone, began to groan, not so much from the pain, although it was horrible, as from mental anguish.

"Always the same thing, and the same thing; all these endless days and nights. Would it might come very soon! What very soon? Death, blackness? No, no! Anything rather than death!"

When Piotr came back with the tea on a tray, Ivan Ilyitch stared long at him in bewilderment, not comprehending who he was, what he was. Piotr was

abashed at this gaze; and when Piotr showed his confusion, Ivan Ilyitch came to himself.

"Oh, yes," said he, "the tea; very well, set it down. Only help me to wash, and to put on a clean shirt."

And Ivan Ilyitch began to perform his toilet. With resting spells he washed his hands and face, cleaned his teeth, began to comb his hair, and looked into the mirror. It seemed frightful, perfectly frightful, to him, to see how his hair lay flat upon his pale brow.

While he was changing his shirt, he knew that it would be still more frightful if he gazed at his body; and so he did not look at himself. But now it was done. He put on his khalat, wrapped himself in his plaid, and sat down in his easy-chair to take his tea. For a single moment he felt refreshed; but as soon as he began to drink the tea, again that same taste, that same pain. He compelled himself to drink it all, and lay down, stretching out his legs. He lay down, and let Piotr go.

Always the same thing. Now a drop of hope gleaming, then a sea of despair rising up, and always pain, always melancholy, and always the same monotony. It was terribly melancholy to the lonely man; he longed to call in some one, but he knew in advance that it is still worse when others are present.

"Even morphine again .... to get a little sleep! .... I will tell him, tell the doctor, to find something else. It is impossible, impossible so."

One hour, two hours, would pass in this way. But there! the bell in the corridor. Perhaps it is the doctor. Exactly: it is the doctor, fresh, hearty, portly, jovial, with an expression as if he said, "You may feel apprehension of something or other, but we will immediately straighten things out for you."

The doctor knows that this expression is not appropriate here; but he has already put it on once for all, and he cannot rid himself of it — like a man who has put on his dress-coat in the morning, and gone to make calls.

The doctor rubs his hands with an air of hearty assurance.

"I am cold. A healthy frost. Let me get warm a little," says he, with just the expression that signifies that all he needs is to wait until he gets warmed a little, and, when he is warmed, then he will straighten things out.

"Well, now, how goes it?"

Ivan Ilyitch feels that the doctor wants to say, "How go your little affairs?" but that he feels that it is impossible to say so; and he says, "What sort of a night did you have?"

Ivan Ilyitch would look at the doctor with an expression which seemed to ask the question, "Are you never ashamed of lying?"

But the doctor has no desire to understand his question.

And Ivan Ilyitch *says:*—

"It was just horrible! The pain does not cease, does not disappear. If you could only give me something for it!"

"That is always the way with you sick folks! Well, now, it seems to me I am warm enough; even the most particular Praskovia Feodorovna would not find anything to take exception to in my temperature. Well, now, how are you really?"

And the doctor shakes hands with him.

And, laying aside his former jocularity, the doctor begins with serious mien to examine the sick man, his pulse and temperature, and he renews the tappings and the auscultation.

Ivan Ilyitch knew for a certainty, and beyond peradventure, that all this was nonsense and foolish deception; but when the doctor, on his knees, leaned over toward him, applying his ear, now higher up, now lower down, and with most sapient mien performed various gymnastic evolutions on him, Ivan Ilyitch succumbed to him, as once he succumbed to the discourses of the lawyers, even when he knew perfectly well that they were deceiving him, and why they were deceiving him.

The doctor, still on his knees on the divan, was still performing the auscultation, when at the door were heard the rustle of Praskovia Feodorovna's silk dress, and her

words of blame to Piotr because he had not informed her of the doctor's visit.

She came in, kissed her husband, and immediately began to explain that she had been up a long time; and only through a misunderstanding she had not been there when the doctor came.

Ivan Ilyitch looked at her, observed her from head to foot, and felt a secret indignation at her fairness and her plumpness, and the cleanliness of her hands, her neck, her glossy hair, and the brilliancy of her eyes, brimming with life. He hated her with all the strength of his soul, and her touch made him suffer an actual paroxysm of hatred of her.

Her attitude toward him and his malady was the same as before. Just as the doctor had formulated his treatment of his patient and could not change it, so she had formulated her treatment of him, making him feel that he was not doing what he ought to do, and was himself to blame; and she liked to reproach him for this, and she could not change her attitude toward him.

"Now, just see! he does not heed, he does not take his medicine regularly; and, above all, he lies in a position that is surely bad for him — his feet up."

She related how he made Gerasim hold his legs.

The doctor listened with a disdainfully good-natured smile, as much as to say: —

"What is to be done about it, pray? These sick folks are always conceiving some such foolishness. But you must let it go."

When the examination was over, the doctor looked at his watch; and then Praskovia Feodorovna declared to Ivan Ilyitch that, whether he was willing or not, she was going that very day to call in the celebrated doctor to come and have an examination and consultation with Mikhaïl Danilovitch — that was the name of their ordinary doctor.

"Now, don't oppose it, please. I am doing this for my own self," she said ironically, giving him to understand that she did it all for him, and only on this account did not allow him the right to oppose her.

He said nothing, and frowned. He felt that this lie surrounding him was so complicated that it was now hard to escape from it.

She did all this for him, only in her own interest; and she said that she was doing it for him, while she was in reality doing it for herself, as some incredible thing, so that he was forced to take it in its opposite sense.

The celebrated doctor, in fact, came about half-past eleven. Once more they had auscultations; and learned discussions took place before him, or in the next room, about his kidney, about the blind intestine, and questions and answers in such a learned form that again the place of the real question of life and death, which now alone faced him, was driven away by the question of the kidney and the blind intestine, which were not acting as became them, and on which Mikhaïl Danilovitch and the celebrity were to fall instantly and compel to attend to their duties.

The famous doctor took leave with a serious but not hopeless expression. And in reply to the timid question which Ivan Ilyitch's eyes, shining with fear and hope, asked of him, whether there was a possibility of his getting well, it replied that it could not vouch for it, but there was a possibility.

The look of hope with which Ivan Ilyitch followed the doctor was so pathetic that Praskovia Feodorovna, seeing it, even wept, as she went out of the library door in order to give the celebrated doctor his honorarium.

The raising of his spirits, caused by the doctor's hopefulness, was but temporary. Again the same room, the same pictures, curtains, wall-paper, vials, and his aching, pain-broken body. And Ivan Ilyitch began to groan. They gave him a subcutaneous injection, and he fell asleep.

When he woke up it was beginning to grow dusky. They brought him his dinner. He forced himself to eat a little *bouillon*. And again the same monotony, and again the advancing night.

About seven o'clock, after dinner, Praskovia Feodorovna came into his room, dressed as for a party, with

her exuberant bosom swelling in her stays, and with traces of powder on her face. She had already that morning told him that they were going to the theater. Sarah Bernhardt had come to town, and they had a box which he had insisted on their taking.

Now he had forgotten about that, and her toilet offended him. But he concealed his vexation when he recollected that he himself had insisted on their taking a box, and going, on the ground that it would be an instructive, esthetic enjoyment for the children.

Praskovia Feodorovna came in self-satisfied, but, as it were, feeling a little to blame. She sat down, asked after his health, as he saw, only for the sake of asking, and not so as to learn, knowing that there was nothing to learn, and began to say what was incumbent on her to say, — that she would not have gone for anything, but that they had taken the box; and that Elen and her daughter and Petrishchef — the examining magistrate, her daughter's betrothed — were going, and it was impossible to let them go alone, but that it would have been more agreeable to her to stay at home with him. Only he should be sure to follow the doctor's prescriptions in her absence.

"Yes — and Feodor Petrovitch" — the betrothed — "wanted to come in. May he? And Liza!"

"Let them come."

The daughter came in, in evening dress, with her fair young body, — her body that made his anguish more keen. But she paraded it before him, strong, healthy, evidently in love, and irritated against the disease, the suffering, and death which stood in the way of her happiness.

Feodor Petrovitch also entered, in his dress-coat, with curly hair *à la Capoul*, with long, sinewy neck tightly incased in a white standing collar, with a huge white bosom, and his long, muscular legs in tight black trousers, with a white glove on one hand, and with an opera hat.[1]

Immediately behind him, almost unnoticed, came the gymnasium scholar, in his new uniform, poor little fellow,

[1] *Klak*, from French *claque*.

with gloves on, and with that terrible blue circle under the eyes, the meaning of which Ivan Ilyitch understood.

He always felt a pity for his son. And terrible was his timid and compassionate glance. With the exception of Gerasim, Vasya alone, it seemed to Ivan Ilyitch, understood and pitied him.

All sat down; again they asked after his health. Silence ensued. Liza asked her mother if she had the opera-glasses. A dispute arose between mother and daughter as to who had mislaid them. It was a disagreeable episode.

Feodor Petrovitch asked Ivan Ilyitch if he had seen Sarah Bernhardt. Ivan Ilyitch did not at first understand his question, but in a moment he said: —

"No .... why, have you seen her yet?"

"Yes, in 'Adrienne Lecouvreur.'"

Praskovia Feodorovna said that she was especially good in that. The daughter disagreed with her. A conversation arose about the grace and realism of her acting, — the same conversation, which is always and forever one and the same thing.

In the midst of the conversation, Feodor Petrovitch glanced at Ivan Ilyitch, and grew silent. The others glanced at him, and grew silent. Ivan Ilyitch was looking straight ahead with gleaming eyes, evidently indignant at them. Some one had to extricate them from their embarrassment, but there seemed to be no way out of it. No one spoke; and a panic seized them all, lest suddenly this ceremonial lie should somehow be shattered, and the absolute truth become manifest to all.

Liza was the first to speak. She broke the silence. She wished to hide what all felt, but she betrayed it.

"One thing is certain, — *if we are going*, it is time," she said, glancing at her watch, her father's gift; and giving the young man a sign, scarcely perceptible, and yet understood by him, she smiled, and arose in her rustling dress.

All arose, said good-by, and went.

When they had gone, Ivan Ilyitch thought that he felt easier: the lying was at an end; it had gone with

them; but the pain remained. Always this same pain, always this same terror, made it hard as hard could be. There was no easing of it. It grew ever worse, always worse.

Again minute after minute dragged by, hour after hour, forever the same monotony, and forever endless, and forever more terrible — the inevitable end.

"Yes, send me Gerasim," was his reply to Piotr's question.

CHAPTER IX

Late at night his wife returned. She came in on her tiptoes, but he heard her; he opened his eyes, and quickly closed them again. She wanted to send Gerasim away, and sit with him herself. He opened his eyes, and said: —

"No, go away."

"You suffer very much."

"It makes no difference."

"Take some opium."

He consented, and drank it. She went.

Until three o'clock he was in a painful sleep. It seemed to him that they were forcing him cruelly into a narrow sack, black and deep; and they kept crowding him down, but could not force him in. And this performance, horrible for him, was accompanied with anguish. And he was afraid, and yet wished to get in, and struggled against it, and yet tried to help.

And here suddenly he broke through, and fell .... and awoke.

There was Gerasim still sitting at his feet on the bed, dozing peacefully, patiently.

But he was lying there with his emaciated legs in stockings resting on his shoulders, the same candle with its shade, and the same never ending pain.

"Go away, Gerasim," he whispered.

"It 's nothing; I will sit here a little while."

"No, go away."

He took down his legs, lay on his side on his arm, and began to pity himself. He waited only until Gerasim had gone into the next room, and then he no longer tried to control himself, but wept like a child. He wept over his helplessness, over his terrible loneliness, over the cruelty of men, over the cruelty of God, over the absence of God.

"Why hast Thou done this? Why didst Thou place me here? Why, why dost Thou torture me so horribly?"

He expected no reply; and he wept because there was none, and could be none. The pain seized him again; but he did not stir, did not call. He said to himself: —

"There, now, again, now strike! But why? What have I done to Thee? Why is it?"

Then he became silent; ceased not only to weep, ceased to breathe, and became all attention: as it were, he heard, not a voice speaking with sounds, but the voice of his soul, the tide of his thoughts, arising in him.

"What dost thou need?" was the first clear concept possible to be expressed in words which he heard.

"'What dost thou need? What dost thou need?'" he said to himself. "What? Freedom from suffering. To live," he replied.

And again he gave his attention, with such effort that already he did not even notice his pain.

"To live? how live?" asked the voice of his soul.

"Yes, to live as I used to live — well, pleasantly."

"How didst thou live before when thou didst live well and pleasantly?" asked the voice.

And he began to call up in his imagination the best moments of his pleasant life. But, strangely enough, all these best moments of his pleasant life seemed to him absolutely different from what they had seemed then, — all, except the earliest remembrances of his childhood. There, in childhood, was something really pleasant, which would give new zest to life if it were to return. But the person who had enjoyed that pleasant

existence was no more; it was as if it were the remembrance of some one else.

As soon as the period began which had produced the present *he*, Ivan Ilyitch, all the pleasures which seemed such then, now in his eyes dwindled away, and changed into something of no account, and even disgusting.

And the farther he departed from infancy, and the nearer he came to the present, so much the more unimportant and dubious were the pleasures.

This began in the law-school. There was still something even then which was truly good; then there was gayety, there was friendship, there were hopes. But in the upper classes these good moments became rarer.

Then, in the time of his first service at the governor's, again appeared good moments; these were the recollections of love for a woman. Then all this became confused, and the happy time grew less. The nearer he came to the present, the worse it grew, and still worse and worse it grew.

"My marriage.... so unexpected, and disillusionment and my wife's breath, and sensuality, hypocrisy! And this dead service, and these labors for money; and thus one year, and two, and ten, and twenty,— and always the same thing. And the longer it went, the more dead it became.

"It is as if all the time I were going down the mountain, while thinking that I was climbing it. So it was. According to public opinion, I was climbing the mountain; and all the time my life was gliding away from under my feet.... And here it is already .... die!

"What is this? Why? It cannot be! It cannot be that life has been so irrational, so disgusting. But even if it is so disgusting and irrational, still, why die, and die in such agony? There is no reason.

"Can it be that I did not live as I ought?" suddenly came into his head. "But how can that be, when I have done all that it was my duty to do?" he asked himself. And immediately he put away this sole explana-

tion of the enigma of life and death as something absolutely impossible.

"What dost thou wish now? — To live? To live how? To live as thou livest in court when the usher[1] proclaims, 'The court is coming! the court is coming'?[2]

"The court is coming — the court," he repeated to himself. "Here it is, the court. Yes; but I am not guilty," he cried with indignation. "What for?"

And he ceased to weep; and, turning his face to the wall, he began to think about that one thing, and that alone. "Why, wherefore, all this horror?"

But, in spite of all his thoughts, he received no answer. And when the thought occurred to him, as it had often occurred to him, that all this came from the fact that he had not lived as he should, he instantly remembered all the correctness of his life, and he drove away this strange thought.

CHAPTER X

Thus two weeks longer passed. Ivan Ilyitch no longer got up from the divan. He did not wish to lie in bed, and he lay on the divan. And, lying almost all the time with his face to the wall, he still suffered in solitude the same inexplicable sufferings, and still thought in solitude the same inexplicable thought.

"What is this? Is it true that this is death?"

And an inward voice responded: —

"Yes, it is true."

"Why these torments?"

And the voice responded: —

"But it is so. There is no why."

Farther and beyond this, there was nothing.

From the very beginning of his malady, from the time when Ivan Ilyitch for the first time went to the doctor, his life was divided into two conflicting tendencies, alternately succeeding each other. Now it was

[1] *Sudyebnui pristaf.*

[2] *Sud idyot,* — a preliminary proclamation, like our *oyes.*

despair, and the expectation of an incomprehensible and frightful death; now it was hope, and the observation of the functional activity of his body, so full of interest for him. Now before his eyes was the kidney, or the intestine, which, for the time being, failed to fulfil its duty. Then it was that incomprehensible, horrible death, from which it was impossible for any one to escape.

These two mental states, from the very beginning of his illness, kept alternating with one another. But the farther the illness progressed, the more dubious and fantastical became his ideas about the kidney, and the more real his consciousness of approaching death.

He had but to call to mind what he had been three months before, and what he was now, to call to mind with what regularity he had been descending the mountain; and that was sufficient for all possibility of hope to be dispelled.

During the last period of this solitude through which he was passing, as he lay with his face turned to the back of the divan, — a solitude amid a populous city, and amid his numerous circle of friends and family, — a solitude deeper than which could not be found anywhere, either in the depths of the sea, or in the earth, — during the last period of this terrible solitude, Ivan Ilyitch lived only by imagination in the past.

One after another, the pictures of his past life arose before him. They always began with the time nearest to the present, and went back to the very remotest, — to his childhood, and there they rested.

If Ivan Ilyitch remembered the stewed prunes which they had given him to eat that very day, then he remembered the raw, puckery French prunes of his childhood, their peculiar taste, and the abundant flow of saliva caused by the stone. And in connection with these recollections of taste, started a whole series of recollections of that time, — his nurse, his brother, his toys.

"I must not think about these things; it is too painful," said Ivan Ilyitch to himself. And again he

transported himself to the present, — the button on the back of the divan, and the wrinkles of the morocco. "Morocco is costly, not durable. There was a quarrel about it. But there was some other morocco, and some other quarrel, when we tore father's portfolio and got punished, and mamma brought us some tarts." [1]

And again his thoughts reverted to childhood; and again it was painful to Ivan Ilyitch, and he tried to avoid it, and think of something else.

And again, together with this current of recollections, there passed through his mind another current of recollections about the progress and rise of his disease. Here, also, according as he went back, there was more and more of life. There was more, also, of excellence in life, and more of life itself. And the two were confounded.

"Just as this agony goes from worse to worse, so also all my life has gone from worse to worse," he thought. "One shining point, there back in the distance, at the beginning of life; and then all growing blacker and blacker, swifter and swifter, in inverse proportion to the square of the distance from death," thought Ivan Ilyitch.

And the comparison of a stone falling with accelerating rapidity occurred to his mind. Life, a series of increasing tortures, always speeding swifter and swifter to the end, — the most horrible torture.

"I am falling."....

He shuddered, he tossed, he wished to resist it. But he already knew that it was impossible to resist; and again, with eyes weary of looking, but still not able to resist looking at what was before him, he stared at the back of the divan, and waited, waited for this frightful fall, shock, and destruction.

"It is impossible to resist," he said to himself. "But can I not know the wherefore of it? Even that is impossible. It might be explained by saying that I had not lived as I ought. But it is impossible to acknowl-

[1] *Pirozhki.*

edge that," he said to himself, recollecting all the legality, the uprightness, the propriety of his life.

"It is impossible to admit that," he said to himself, with a smile on his lips, as if some one were to see that smile of his, and be deceived by it.

"No explanation! torture, death .... why?"

CHAPTER XI

Thus passed two weeks. In these weeks, there occurred an event desired by Ivan Ilyitch and his wife. Petrishchef made a formal proposal. This took place in the evening. On the next day, Praskovia Feodorovna went to her husband, meditating in what way to explain to him Feodor Petrovitch's proposition; but that very same night, a change for the worse had taken place in Ivan Ilyitch's condition. Praskovia Feodorovna found him on the same divan, but in a new position. He was lying on his back; he was groaning, and looking straight up with a fixed stare.

She began to speak about medicines. He turned his eyes on her. She did not finish saying what she had begun, so great was the hatred against her expressed in that look.

"For Christ's sake, let me die in peace!" said he.

She was about to go out; but just at this instant the daughter came in, and came near to wish him good-morning. He looked at his daughter as he had looked at his wife, and, in reply to her questions about his health, told her dryly that he would quickly relieve them all of his presence. Neither mother nor daughter said anything more; but they sat for a few moments longer, and then went out.

"What are we to blame for?" said Liza to her mother. "As if we had made him so! I am sorry for papa, but why should he torment us?"

At the usual time the doctor came. Ivan Ilyitch answered "yes," "no," not taking his angry eyes from him; and at last he said: —

"Now see here, you know that you don't help any, so leave me!"

"We can appease your sufferings," said the doctor.

"You cannot even do that; leave me!"

The doctor went into the drawing-room, and advised Praskovia Feodorovna that it was very serious, and that there was only one means — opium — of appeasing his sufferings, which must be terrible.

The doctor said that his physical sufferings were terrible, and this was true; but more terrible than his physical sufferings were his moral sufferings, and in this was his chief torment.

His moral sufferings consisted in the fact that that very night, as he looked at Gerasim's sleepy, good-natured face, with its high cheek-bones, it had suddenly come into his head: —

"But how is it if in reality my whole life, my conscious life, has been wrong?"

It came into his head that what had shortly before presented itself to him as an absolute impossibility — that he had not lived his life as he ought — might be true. It came into his head that the scarcely recognizable desires to struggle against what men highest in position considered good, — desires scarcely recognizable, which he had immediately banished, — might be true, and all the rest might be wrong. And his service, and his course of life, and his family, and these interests of society and office — all this might be wrong.

He endeavored to defend all this before himself. And suddenly he realized all the weakness of what he was defending. And there was nothing to defend.

"But if this is so," he said to himself, "and I am departing from life with the consciousness that I have wasted all that was given me, and that it is impossible to rectify it, what then?"

He lay flat on his back, and began entirely anew to examine his whole life.

When in the morning he saw the lackey, then his wife, then his daughter, then the doctor, each one of their motions, each one of their words, confirmed for him the

terrible truth which had been disclosed to him that night. He saw in them himself, all that for which he had lived; and he saw clearly that all this was wrong, all this was a terrible, monstrous lie, concealing both life and death.

This consciousness increased his physical sufferings, added tenfold to them. He groaned and tossed, and threw off the clothes. It seemed to him that they choked him, and loaded him down.

And that was why he detested them.

They gave him a great dose of opium; he became unconscious, but at dinner-time the same thing began again. He drove them from him, and threw himself from place to place.

His wife came to him, and said: —

"Jean, darling,[1] do this for me (*for me!*). It cannot do any harm, and sometimes it helps. Why, it is a mere nothing. And often well people try it."

He opened his eyes wide.

"What? Take the sacrament? Why? It's not necessary. But, however...."

She burst into tears.

"Will you, my dear? I will get our priest. He is so sweet!"

"Excellent! very good," he continued.

When the priest came, and confessed him, he became calmer, felt, as it were, an alleviation of his doubts, and consequently of his sufferings; and there came a moment of hope. He again began to think about the blind intestine and the possibility of curing it. He took the sacrament with tears in his eyes.

When they put him to bed after the sacrament, he felt comfortable for the moment, and once more hope of life appeared. He began to think of the operation which they had proposed.

"I want to live, to live," he said to himself.

His wife came to congratulate him. She said the customary words, and added: —

"You feel better, don't you?"

Without looking at her, he said: —

[1] *Galubchik;* literally, little pigeon.

"Yes."

Her hope, her temperament, the expression of her face, the sound of her voice, all said to him one thing:—

"Wrong! all that for which thou hast lived, and thou livest, is falsehood, deception, hiding from thee life and death."

And as soon as he expressed this thought, his exasperation returned, and, together with his exasperation, the physical, tormenting agony; and, with the agony, the consciousness of inevitable death close at hand. Something new took place: a screw seemed to turn in him, twinging pain to show through him, and his breathing was constricted.

The expression of his face, when he said "yes," was terrible. After he had said that "yes," he looked straight into her face, and then, with extraordinary quickness for one so weak, he threw himself on his face and cried:—

"Go away! go away! leave me!"

CHAPTER XII

From that moment began that shriek that did not cease for three days, and was so terrible that, when it was heard two rooms away, it was impossible to hear it without terror. At the moment that he answered his wife, he felt that he was lost, and there was no return, that the end had come, absolutely the end, and the question was not settled, but remained a question.

"U! uu! u!" he cried in varying intonations. He began to shriek, "*N'ye khotchu* — I won't;" and thus he kept up the cry on the letter *u*.

Three whole days, during which for him there was no time, he struggled in that black sack into which an invisible, invincible power was thrusting him. He fought as one condemned to death fights in the hands of the hangman, knowing that he cannot save himself, and at every moment he felt that, notwithstanding all the violence of his struggle, he was nearer and nearer to that which terrified him. He felt that his suffering con-

sisted, both in the fact that he was being thrust into that black hole, and still more that he could not make his way through into it. What hindered him from making his way through was the confession that his life had been good. This justification of his life caught him, and did not let him advance, and more than all else tormented him.

Suddenly some force knocked him in the breast, in the side, still more forcibly compressed his breath; he was hurled through the hole, and there at the bottom of the hole some light seemed to shine on him. It happened to him as it sometimes does on a railway carriage when you think that you are going forward, but are really going backward, and suddenly recognize the true direction.

"Yes, all was wrong," he said to himself; "but that is nothing. I might, I might have done right. What is right?" he asked himself, and suddenly stopped.

This was at the end of the third day, two hours before his death. At this very same time the little student noiselessly stole into his father's room, and approached his bed. The moribund was continually shrieking desperately, and tossing his arms. His hand struck upon the little student's head. The little student seized it, pressed it to his lips, and burst into tears.

It was at this very same time that Ivan Ilyitch fell through, saw the light, and it was revealed to him that his life had not been as it ought, but that still it was possible to repair it. He was just asking himself, "What is right?" and stopped to listen.

Then he felt that some one was kissing his hand. He opened his eyes, and looked at his son. He felt sorry for him. His wife came to him. He looked at her. With open mouth, and with her nose and cheeks wet with tears, with an expression of despair, she was looking at him. He felt sorry for her.

"Yes, I am a torment to them," he thought. "I am sorry for them, but they will be better off when I am dead."

He wanted to express this, but he had not the strength to say it.

"However, why should I say it? I must do it."

He pointed out his son to his wife by a glance, and said:—

"Take him away.... I am sorry.... and for thee."

He wanted to say also, "*Prosti*—Forgive," but he said, "*Propusti*—Let it pass;" and, not having the strength to correct himself, he waved his hand, knowing that he would comprehend who had the right.

And suddenly it became clear to him that what oppressed him, and was hidden from him, suddenly was lighted up for him all at once, and on two sides, on ten sides, on all sides.

He felt sorry for them; he felt that he must do something to make it less painful for them. To free them, and free himself, from these torments, "How good and how simple!" he thought.

"But the pain," he asked himself, "where is it?—Here, now, where art thou, pain?"

He began to listen.

"Yes, here it is! Well, then, do your worst, pain!"

"And death? where is it?"

He tried to find his former customary fear of death, and could not.

"Where is death? What is it?"

There was no fear, because there was no death.

In place of death was light!

"Here is something like!" he suddenly said aloud. "What joy!"

For him all this passed in a single instant, and the significance of this instant did not change.

For those who stood by his side, his death-agony was prolonged two hours more. In his breast something bubbled up, his emaciated body shuddered. Then more and more rarely came the bubbling and the rattling.

"It is all over," said some one above him.

He heard these words, and repeated them in his soul.

"It is over! death!" he said to himself. "It does not exist more."

He drew in one more breath, stopped in the midst of it, stretched himself, and died.

THREE DEATHS

A TALE

(1859)

CHAPTER I

IT was autumn.

Along the highway came two equipages at a brisk pace. In the first carriage sat two women. One was a lady, thin and pale; the other, her maid, with a brilliant red complexion, and plump. Her short, dry locks escaped from under a faded cap; her red hand, in a torn glove, put them back with a jerk. Her full bosom, incased in a tapestry shawl, breathed of health; her keen black eyes now gazed through the window at the fields hurrying by them, now rested on her mistress, now peered solicitously into the corners of the coach.

Before the maid's face swung the lady's bonnet on the rack; on her knees lay a puppy; her feet were raised by packages lying on the floor, and could almost be heard drumming upon them above the noise of the creaking of the springs and the rattling of the windows.

The lady, with her hands resting in her lap and her eyes shut, feebly swayed on the cushions which supported her back, and, slightly frowning, tried to suppress her cough.

She wore a white nightcap, and a blue neckerchief twisted around her delicate pale neck. A straight line, disappearing under the cap, parted her perfectly smooth blond hair, which was pomaded; and there was a dry, deathly appearance about the whiteness of the skin, in this wide parting. The withered and rather sallow skin

was loosely drawn over her delicate and pretty features, and there was a hectic flush on the cheeks and cheek-bones. Her lips were dry and restless, her thin eye-lashes had lost their curve, and a cloth traveling capote made straight folds over her sunken chest. Although her eyes were closed, her face gave the impression of weariness, irascibility, and habitual suffering.

The lackey, leaning back, was napping on the coach-box. The *yamshchik*, or hired driver, shouting in a clear voice, urged on his four powerful and sweaty horses, occasionally looking back at the other driver, who was shouting just behind them in an open barouche. The tires of the wheels, in their even and rapid course, left wide parallel tracks on the limy mud of the highway.

The sky was gray and cold, a moist mist was falling over the fields and the road. It was suffocating in the carriage, and smelt of eau-de-Cologne and dust. The invalid leaned back her head, and slowly opened her eyes. Her great eyes were brilliant, and of a beautiful dark color.

"Again!" said she, nervously, pushing away with her beautiful attenuated hand the end of her maid's cloak, which occasionally hit against her leg. Her mouth contracted painfully.

Matriosha raised her cloak in both hands, lifting herself up on her strong legs, and then sat down again, farther away. Her fresh face was suffused with a brilliant scarlet.

The invalid's beautiful dark eyes eagerly followed the maid's motions; and then with both hands she took hold of the seat, and did her best to raise herself a little higher, but her strength was not sufficient.

Again her mouth became contracted, and her whole face took on an expression of unavailing, angry irony.

"If you would only help me .... ah! It's not necessary. I can do it myself. Only have the goodness not to put those pillows behind me. .... On the whole, you had better not touch them, if you don't understand!"

The lady closed her eyes, and then again, quickly raising the lids, gazed at her maid.

Matriosha looked at her, and gnawed her red lower lip. A heavy sigh escaped from the sick woman's breast; but the sigh was not ended, but was merged in a fit of coughing. She scowled, and turned her face away, clutching her chest with both hands. When the coughing fit was over, she once more shut her eyes, and continued to sit motionless. The coach and the barouche rolled into a village. Matriosha drew her fat hand from under her shawl, and made the sign of the cross.

"What is this?" demanded the lady.

"A post-station, madame." [1]

"Why did you cross yourself, I should like to know?"

"The church, madame."

The invalid lady looked out of the window, and began slowly to cross herself, gazing with all her eyes at the great village church, in front of which her carriage was now passing.

The two vehicles came to a stop together at the post-house. The sick woman's husband and the doctor dismounted from the barouche, and came to the coach.

"How are you feeling?" asked the doctor, taking her pulse.

"Well, my dear, aren't you fatigued?" asked the husband, in French. "Would n't you like to get out?"

Matriosha, gathering up the bundles, squeezed herself into the corner, so as not to interfere with the conversation.

"No matter, it's all the same thing," replied the invalid. "I will not get out."

The husband, after standing there a little, went into the post-house. Matriosha, jumping from the coach, tiptoed across the muddy road into the inclosure.

"If I am miserable, there is no reason why the rest of you should not have breakfast," said the sick woman, smiling faintly to the doctor, who was standing by her window.

"It makes no difference to them how I am," she re-

[1] *Sudaruinya.*

marked to herself as the doctor, turning from her with slow step, started to run up the steps of the station-house. "They are well, and it's all the same to them. O my God!"

"How now, Edouard Ivanovitch?" said the husband, as he met the doctor, and rubbing his hands with a gay smile. "I have ordered my traveling-case brought; what do you say to that?"

"That's worth while," replied the doctor.

"Well, now, how about *her?*" asked the husband, with a sigh, lowering his voice and raising his brows.

"I have told you that she cannot reach Moscow, much less Italy, especially in such weather."

"What is to be done, then? Oh! my God! my God!"

The husband covered his eyes with his hand. .... "Give it here," he added, addressing his man, who came bringing the traveling-case.

"You'll have to stop somewhere on the route," replied the doctor, shrugging his shoulders.

"But tell me, what can I do?" rejoined the husband. "I have employed every argument to keep her from going; I have spoken to her of our means, and of our children whom we should have to leave behind, and of my business. She would not hear a word. She has made her plans for living abroad, as if she were well. But if I should tell her what her real condition is, it would kill her."

"Well, she is a dead woman now; you may as well know it, Vasili Dmitritch. A person cannot live without lungs, and there is no way of making lungs grow again. It is melancholy, it is hard, but what is to be done about it? It is my business and yours to make her last days as easy as possible. The confessor is the person needed here."

"Oh, my God! Now just perceive how I am situated, in speaking to her of her last will. Let come whatever may, yet I cannot speak of that. And yet you know how good she is."

"Try at least to persuade her to wait until the

roads are frozen," said the doctor, shaking his head significantly; "something might happen during the journey." ....

"Aksiusha, oh, Aksiusha!" cried the superintendent's daughter, throwing a cloak over her head, and tiptoeing down the muddy back steps. "Come along. Let us have a look at the Shirkinskaya lady; they say she's got lung trouble, and they're taking her abroad. I never saw how any one looked in consumption."

Aksiusha jumped down from the door-sill; and the two girls, hand in hand, hurried out of the gates. Shortening their steps, they walked by the coach, and stared in at the lowered window. The invalid bent her head toward them; but, when she saw their inquisitiveness, she frowned and turned away.

"Oh, de-e-ar!"[1] said the superintendent's daughter, vigorously shaking her head. .... "How wonderfully pretty she used to be, and how she has changed! It is terrible! Did you see? Did you see, Aksiusha?"

"Yes, and how thin she is!" assented Aksiusha. "Let us go by and look again; we'll make believe go to the well. Did you see, she turned away from us; still I got a good view of her. Isn't it too bad, Masha?"

"Yes, but what terrible mud!" replied Masha, and both of them started to run back within the gates.

"It's evident that I have become a fright," thought the sick woman. .... "But we must hurry, hurry, and get abroad, and there I shall soon get well."

"Well, and how are you, my dear?" inquired the husband, coming to the coach with still a morsel of something in his mouth.

"Always one and the same question," thought the sick woman, "and he's even eating!"

"It's no consequence," she murmured, between her teeth.

"Do you know, my dear, I am afraid that this journey in such weather will only make you worse. Edouard

[1] *Mm-a-tushki*, literally, little mothers.

Ivanovitch says the same thing. Had n't we better turn back?"

She maintained an angry silence.

"Maybe the weather will improve, the roads will become good, and that would be better for you; then at least we could start all together."

"Pardon me. If I had not listened to you so long, I should at this moment be at Berlin and have entirely recovered."

"What 's to be done, my angel? it was impossible, as you know. But now if you would wait a month, you would be ever so much better; I could finish up my business, and we could take the children with us." ....

"The children are well, and I am not."

"But just see here, my love, if in this weather you should grow worse on the road .... At least we should be at home."

"What is the use of being at home? .... *Die* at home?" replied the invalid, peevishly.

But the word *die* evidently startled her, and she turned on her husband a supplicating and inquiring look. He dropped his eyes, and said nothing.

The sick woman's mouth suddenly contracted in a childish fashion, and the tears sprang to her eyes. Her husband covered his face with his handkerchief, and silently turned from the coach.

"No, I will go," cried the invalid; and, lifting her eyes to the sky, she clasped her hands, and began to whisper incoherent words. "My God! why must it be?" she said, and the tears flowed more violently.

She prayed long and fervently, but still there was just the same sense of constriction and pain in her chest, just the same gray melancholy in the sky and the fields and the road; just the same autumnal mist, neither thicker nor more tenuous, but ever the same in its monotony, falling on the muddy highway, on the roofs, on the carriage, and on the sheepskin coats of the drivers, who were talking in strong, gay voices, as they were oiling and adjusting the carriage.

* * * * * *

CHAPTER II

The coach was ready, but the driver loitered. He had gone into the drivers' room.[1] In the izba it was warm, close, dark, and suffocating, smelling of human occupation, of cooking bread, of cabbage, and of sheepskin garments.

Several drivers were in the room; the cook was engaged near the oven, on top of which lay a sick man wrapped up in his sheepskins.

"Uncle Khveodor! hey! Uncle Khveodor," called a young man, the driver, in a tulup, and with his knout in his belt, coming into the room, and addressing the sick man.

"What do you want, rattlepate? What are you calling to Fyedka[2] for?" asked one of the drivers. "There 's your carriage waiting for you."

"I want to borrow his boots. Mine are worn out," replied the young fellow, tossing back his curls and straightening his mittens in his belt. "Why? is he asleep? Say, Uncle Khveodor!" he insisted, going to the oven.

"What is it?" a weak voice was heard saying, and an emaciated face was lifted up from the oven.

A broad, gaunt hand, bloodless and covered with hairs, pulled up his overcoat over the dirty shirt that covered his bony shoulder. "Give me something to drink, brother; what is it you want?"

The young fellow handed him a small dish of water.

"I say, Fyedya," said he, hesitating, "I reckon you won't want your new boots now; let me have them? Probably you won't need them any more."

The sick man, dropping his weary head down to the lacquered bowl, and dipping his thin, hanging mustache in the brown water, drank feebly and eagerly.

His tangled beard was unclean; his sunken, clouded

[1] *Izba.*

[2] Fyedka and Fyedya are diminutives of Feodor (Theodore), mispronounced by the yamshchik.

eyes were with difficulty raised to the young man's face. When he had finished drinking, he tried to raise his hand to wipe his wet lips, but his strength failed him, and he wiped them on the sleeve of his overcoat. Silently, and breathing with difficulty through his nose, he looked straight into the young man's eyes, and tried to collect his strength.

"Maybe you have promised them to some one else?" said the young driver. "If that's so, all right. The worst of it is, it is wet outside, and I have to go out to my work, and so I said to myself, 'I reckon I'll ask Fyedka for his boots; I reckon he won't be needing them.' But maybe you will need them,—just say." ....

Something began to bubble up and rumble in the sick man's chest; he bent over, and began to strangle, with a cough that rattled in his throat.

"Now I should like to know where he would need them?" unexpectedly snapped out the cook, angrily addressing the whole hovel. "This is the second month that he has not crept down from the oven. Just see how he is all broken up! and you can hear how it must hurt him inside. Where would he need boots? They would not think of burying him in new ones! And it was time long ago, God pardon me the sin of saying so. Just see how he chokes! He ought to be taken from this room to another, or somewhere. They say there's hospitals in the city; but what's you going to do? he takes up the whole room, and that's too much. There is n't any room at all. And yet you are expected to keep neat."

"Hey! Seryoha, come along, take your place, the people are waiting," cried the head man of the station, coming to the door.

Seryoha started to go without waiting for his reply, but the sick man during his cough intimated by his eyes that he was going to speak.

"You take the boots, Seryoha," said he, conquering the cough, and getting his breath a little. "Only, do you hear, buy me a stone when I am dead," he added hoarsely.

"Thank you, uncle; then I will take them, and as for the stone, — yei-yei! — I will buy you one."

"There, children, you are witnesses," the sick man was able to articulate, and then once more he bent over and began to choke.

"All right, we have heard," said one of the drivers. "But run, Seryoha, or else the starosta will be after you again. You know Lady Shirkinskaya is sick."

Seryoha quickly pulled off his ragged, unwieldy boots, and flung them under the bench. Uncle Feodor's new ones fitted his feet exactly, and the young driver could not keep his eyes off them as he went to the carriage.

"Ek! what splendid boots! Here's some grease," called another driver with the grease-pot in his hand, as Seryoha mounted to his box and gathered up the reins. "Get them for nothing?"

"So you're jealous, are you?" cried Seryoha, lifting up and tucking around his legs the tails of his overcoat. "Off with you, my darlings," he cried to the horses, cracking his knout; and the coach and barouche, with their occupants, trunks, and other belongings, were hidden in the thick autumnal mist, and rapidly whirled away over the wet road.

The sick driver remained on the oven in the stifling hovel, and, not being able to throw off the phlegm, by a supreme effort turned over on the other side, and stopped coughing.

Till evening there was a continual coming and going, and eating of meals in the room, and the sick man was not noticed. Before night came on, the cook climbed up on the oven, and got the sheepskin coat from the farther side of his legs.

"Don't be angry with me, Nastasya," exclaimed the sick man. "I shall soon leave your room."

"All right, all right, it's of no consequence," muttered the woman. "But what is the matter with you, uncle? Tell me."

"All my inwards are gnawed out. God knows what it is!"

"And I don't doubt your gullet hurts you when you cough so!"

"It hurts me all over. My death is at hand, that's what it is. Okh! okh! okh!" groaned the sick man.

"Now cover up your legs this way," said Nastasya, comfortably arranging the overcoat so that it would cover him, and then getting down from the oven.

During the night the room was faintly lighted by a single taper. Nastasya and a dozen drivers were sleeping, snoring loudly, on the floor and the benches. Only the sick man feebly hawked and coughed, and tossed on the oven.

In the morning no sound was heard from him.

"I saw something wonderful in my sleep," said the cook, as she stretched herself in the early twilight the next morning. "I seemed to see Uncle Khveodor get down from the oven, and go out to cut wood. 'Look here,' says he, 'I 'm going to help you, Nastya;' and I says to him, 'How can you split wood?' but he seizes the hatchet, and begins to cut so fast, so fast that nothing but chips fly. 'Why,' says I, 'have n't you been sick?' — 'No,' says he, 'I am well,' and he kind of lifted up the ax, and I was scared; and I screamed and woke up. He can't be dead, can he? — Uncle Khveodor! hey, uncle!"

Feodor did not move.

"Now he can't be dead, can he? Go and see," said one of the drivers, who had just waked up.

The emaciated hand, covered with reddish hair, that hung down from the oven, was cold and pale.

"Go tell the superintendent; it seems he is dead," said the driver.

Feodor had no relatives. He was a stranger. On the next day they buried him in the new burying-ground behind the grove; and Nastasya for many days had to tell everybody of the vision which she had seen, and how she had been the first to discover that Uncle Feodor was dead.

CHAPTER III

Spring had come.

Along the wet streets of the city swift streamlets ran purling between heaps of dung-covered ice; bright were the colors of people's dresses and the tones of their voices, as they hurried along. In the walled gardens, the buds on the trees were burgeoning, and the fresh breeze swayed their branches with a soft gentle murmur. Everywhere transparent drops were forming and falling. ....

The sparrows chattered incoherently, and fluttered about on their little wings. On the sunny side, on the walls, houses, and trees, all was full of life and brilliancy. The sky, and the earth, and the heart of man overflowed with youth and joy.

In front of a great seignorial mansion, in one of the principal streets, fresh straw had been laid down; in the house lay that same moribund invalid whom we saw hastening abroad.

Near the closed doors of her room stood the sick lady's husband, and a lady well along in years. On a divan sat the confessor, with cast-down eyes, holding something wrapped up under his stole.[1] In one corner, in a Voltaire easy-chair, reclined an old lady, the sick woman's mother, weeping violently.

Near her stood the maid, holding a clean handkerchief, ready for the old lady's use when she should ask for it. Another maid was rubbing the old lady's temples, and blowing on her gray head underneath her cap.

"Well, Christ be with you, my dear," said the husband to the elderly lady who was standing with him near the door: "she has such confidence in you; you know how to talk with her; go and speak with her a little while, my darling,[2] please go!"

He was about to open the door for her; but his cousin held him back, putting her handkerchief several times to her eyes, and shaking her head.

[1] Called *epitrachilion* in the Greek Church. [2] *Galubushka*, little dove.

"There, now she will not see that I have been weeping," said she, and, opening the door herself, went to the invalid.

The husband was in the greatest excitement, and seemed quite beside himself. He started to go over to the old mother, but, after taking a few steps, he turned around, walked the length of the room, and approached the priest.

The priest looked at him, raised his brows toward heaven, and sighed. The thick gray beard also was lifted and fell again.

"My God! my God!" said the husband.

"What can you do?" exclaimed the confessor, sighing and again lifting up his brows and beard, and letting them drop.

"And the old mother there!" exclaimed the husband, almost in despair. "She will not be able to endure it. You see, she loved her so, she loved her so, that she.... I don't know. You might try, father,[1] to calm her a little, and persuade her to go away."

The confessor arose and went over to the old lady.

"It is true, no one can appreciate a mother's heart," said he, "but God is compassionate."

The old lady's face was suddenly convulsed, and a hysterical sob shook her frame.

"God is compassionate," repeated the priest, when she had grown a little calmer. "I will tell you, in my parish there was a sick man, and much worse than Marya Dmitrievna, and he, though he was only a shopkeeper,[2] was cured in a very short time, by means of herbs. And this very same shopkeeper is now in Moscow. I have told Vasili Dmitrievitch about him; it might be tried, you know. At all events, it would satisfy the invalid. With God, all things are possible."

"No, she won't get well," persisted the old lady. "Why should God have taken her, and not me?"

And again the hysterical sobbing overcame her, so violently that she fainted away.

[1] *Batyushka.*

[2] *Meshchanin;* French, *bourgeois.*

The invalid's husband hid his face in his hands, and rushed from the room.

In the corridor the first person whom he met was a six-year-old boy, who was chasing his little sister with all his might and main.

"Do you bid me take the children to their mamasha?" inquired the nurse.

"No, she does not like to see them. They distract her."

The lad stopped for a moment, and, after looking eagerly into his father's face, he cut a dido with his leg, and with merry shouts ran on.

"I'm playing she's a horse, papasha," cried the little fellow, pointing to his sister.

Meantime, in the next room, the cousin had taken her seat near the sick woman, and was skilfully bringing the conversation by degrees round so as to prepare her for the thought of death. The doctor stood by the window, mixing some draught.

The invalid, in a white capote, all surrounded by cushions, was sitting up in bed, and gazed silently at her cousin.

"Ah, my dear!" she exclaimed, unexpectedly interrupting her, "don't try to prepare me; don't treat me like a little child! I am a Christian woman. I know all about it. I know that I have not long to live; I know that if my husband had heeded me sooner, I should have been in Italy, and possibly, yes probably, should have been well by this time. They all told him so. But what is to be done? it's as God saw fit. We all of us have sinned, I know that; but I hope in the mercy of God, that all will be pardoned, ought to be pardoned. I am trying to sound my own heart. I also have committed many sins, my love. But how much I have suffered in atonement! I have tried to bear my sufferings patiently." ....

"Then shall I have the confessor come in, my love? It will be all the easier for you, after you have been absolved," said the cousin.

The sick woman dropped her head in token of assent. "O God! pardon me, a sinner," she whispered.

The cousin went out, and beckoned to the confessor. "She is an angel," she said to the husband, with tears in her eyes. The husband wept. The priest went into the sick-room; the old lady still remained unconscious, and in the room beyond all was perfectly quiet. At the end of five minutes the confessor came out, and, taking off his stole, arranged his hair.

"Thanks be to the Lord, she is calmer now," said he. "She wishes to see you."

The cousin and the husband went to the sick-room. The invalid, gently weeping, was gazing at the images.

"I congratulate you, my love," said the husband.

"Thank you. How well I feel now! what ineffable joy I experience!" said the sick woman, and a faint smile played over her thin lips. "How merciful God is! Is He not? He is merciful and omnipotent!"

And again with an eager prayer she turned her tearful eyes toward the holy images.

Then suddenly something seemed to occur to her mind. She beckoned to her husband.

"You are never willing to do what I desire," said she, in a weak and querulous voice.

The husband, stretching his neck, listened to her submissively.

"What is it, my love?"

"How many times I have told you that these doctors don't know anything! There are simple women doctors; they make cures. That's what the good father said. .... A shopkeeper .... send for him." ....

"For whom, my love?"

"Good heavens! you can never understand me." And the dying woman frowned, and closed her eyes.

The doctor came to her, and took her hand. Her pulse was evidently growing feebler and feebler. He made a sign to the husband. The sick woman remarked this gesture, and looked around in fright. The cousin turned away to hide her tears.

"Don't weep, don't torment yourselves on my account," said the invalid. "That takes away from me my last comfort."

"You are an angel!" exclaimed the cousin, kissing her hand.

"No, kiss me here. They only kiss the hands of those who are dead. My God! my God!"

That same evening the sick woman was a corpse, and the corpse in the coffin lay in the parlor of the great mansion. In the immense room, the doors of which were closed, sat the clerk,[1] and with a monotonous voice read the Psalms of David through his nose.

The bright glare from the wax candles in the lofty silver candelabra fell on the white brow of the dead, on the heavy waxen hands, on the stiff folds of the cerement which brought out into awful relief the knees and the feet.

The clerk, not varying his tones, continued to read on steadily, and in the silence of the chamber of death his words rang out and died away. Occasionally from distant rooms came the voice of children and their romping.

"*Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.*

"*Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.*

"*The glory of the Lord shall endure forever.*"....

The face of the dead was stern and majestic. But there was no motion either on the pure cold brow, or the firmly closed lips. She was all attention! But did she perhaps now understand these majestic words?

CHAPTER IV

At the end of a month, over the grave of the dead a stone chapel was erected. Over the driver's there was as yet no stone, and only the fresh green grass sprouted over the mound which served as the sole record of the past existence of a man.

"It will be a sin and a shame, Seryoha," said the cook at the station-house one day, "if you don't buy

[1] *Diachok.*

a gravestone for Khveodor. You kept saying, 'It's winter, winter,' but now why don't you keep your word? I heard it all. He has already come back once to ask why you don't do it; if you don't buy him one, he will come again, he will choke you."

"Well, now, have I denied it?" urged Seryoha. "I am going to buy him a stone, as I said I would. I can get one for a ruble and a half. I have not forgotten about it; I'll have to get it. As soon as I happen to be in town, then I'll buy him one."

"You ought at least to put up a cross, that's what you ought to do," said an old driver. "It isn't right at all. You're wearing those boots now."

"Yes. But where could I get him a cross? You wouldn't want to make one out of an old piece of stick, would you?"

"What is that you say? Make one out of an old piece of stick? No; take your ax, go out to the wood a little earlier than usual, and you can hew him out one. Take a little ash tree, and you can make one. You can have a covered cross. If you go then, you won't have to give the watchman a little drink of vodka. One doesn't want to give vodka for every trifle. Now, yesterday I broke my axletree, and I go and hew out a new one of green wood. No one said a word."

Early the next morning, almost before dawn, Seryoha took his ax, and went to the wood.

Over all things hung a cold, dead veil of falling mist, as yet untouched by the rays of the sun.

The east gradually grew brighter, reflecting its pale light over the vault of heaven still covered by light clouds. Not a single grass-blade below, not a single leaf on the topmost branches of the tree-top, waved. Only from time to time could be heard the sounds of fluttering wings in the thicket, or a rustling on the ground broke in on the silence of the forest.

Suddenly a strange sound, foreign to this nature, resounded and died away at the edge of the forest. Again the noise sounded, and was monotonously repeated again and again, at the foot of one of the

ancient, immovable trees. A tree-top began to shake in an extraordinary manner; the juicy leaves whispered something; and the warbler, sitting on one of the branches, flew off a couple of times with a shrill cry, and, wagging its tail, finally perched on another tree.

The ax rang more and more frequently; the white chips, full of sap, were scattered upon the dewy grass, and a slight cracking was heard beneath the blows.

The tree trembled with all its body, leaned over, and quickly straightened itself, shuddering with fear on its base.

For an instant all was still, then once more the tree bent over; a crash was heard in its trunk; and, tearing the thicket, and dragging down the branches, it plunged toward the damp earth.

The noise of the ax and of footsteps ceased.

The warbler uttered a cry, and flew higher. The branch which she grazed with her wings shook for an instant, and then came to rest like all the others with their foliage.

The trees, more joyously than ever, extended their motionless branches over the new space that had been made in their midst.

The first sunbeams, breaking through the cloud, gleamed in the sky, and shone along the earth and heavens.

The mist, in billows, began to float along the hollows; the dew, gleaming, played on the green foliage; translucent white clouds hurried along their azure path.

The birds hopped about in the thicket, and, as if beside themselves, voiced their happiness; the juicy leaves joyfully and contentedly whispered on the tree-tops; and the branches of the living trees slowly and majestically waved over the dead and fallen tree.

NEGLECT A FIRE AND IT SPREADS

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? till seven times ?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times : but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

The servant therefore fell down, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence : and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

And he would not : but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me :

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant even as I had pity on thee ?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." — MATT. xviii. 21–35.

IVAN SHCHERBAKOF, a peasant, lived in the country. He lived well. He had perfect health, he was the best laborer in the village, and he had three sons grown up : one was married, one was engaged, and the third was a lad who was just beginning to tend the

horses and plow. His old wife, Ivanova, was a clever woman, and a good housekeeper; and the daughter-in-law was peaceful and industrious. Ivan lived comfortably with his family. The only one of his household who ate the bread of idleness was his infirm old father. For six years he had been lying on the oven, suffering from asthma. Ivan had plenty of everything; he had three horses and a colt, a cow with a calf, and fifteen sheep. The women not only mended their husbands' clothes, and made them, and also worked in the field: the muzhiks worked like true peasants. The old grain held out till the new came. They paid their taxes, and supplied all their necessities, with their oat-crop. Ivan lived comfortably with his children.

But in the next dvor lived Ivan's neighbor, Gavrilo, a cripple, the son of Gordyeï Ivanof. And a quarrel arose between him and Ivan.

As long as the old Gordyeï was alive, and Ivan's father was manager, the muzhiks lived like exemplary neighbors. If the women needed a sifter or a tub, or the muzhiks needed a corn-cloth or to borrow a wheel, they would send from one yard to the other, and, like good neighbors, accommodate each other. If a calf broke into the threshing-floor, they would drive it out, and only say, "Look out, don't let him come in again; we have not moved the corn yet." But as for hiding or locking things up either at the threshing-floor or in the shed, or quarreling, such things never happened.

Thus they got along while the old folks were alive. But when the next generation took the reins, a new state of things came about.

The whole trouble arose from a trifle.

A little hen belonging to Ivan's daughter-in-law took to laying early in the season. The young wife began to collect the eggs for Easter. Every day she went after the eggs to the wagon-box that stood in the shed. But the children, it seems, scared the hen, which flew over the fence into the neighbor's yard, and there began to lay. The young woman heard the little hen cackling; she said to herself: —

"I have n't time now; I must clean up the izba against the holidays. I 'll go and get it by and by."

In the evening she went to the shed, to the wagon-box; not a sign of an egg. The young woman began to ask her mother-in-law and her brother-in-law if they had taken any out.

"No," say they, "we have n't."

But Taraska, the smallest brother-in-law, said: —

"Your bantam has been laying over in the next yard. She was cackling over there, and she came flying back from there."

And the young woman looked at her bantam; she was sitting next the cockerel on the roost; her eyes were already shut; she was just going to sleep. And she would have asked her where she had been laying, if the hen could only have answered.

And the young woman went over to her neighbor's. The old woman came to the door.

"What do you want, young woman?"

"Well," says she, "baushka,[1] my little hen flew over into your yard to-day. I wonder if she did n't lay an egg?"

"We have n't seen it at all. Our own hens, thank God, have been laying this long time. We gathered up our own, but we don't need other folks's. We, my little girl, never go into strangers' yards to collect eggs."

This was an insult to the young woman, she said a word too much; the neighbor replied in the same way, and the women began to berate each other. Ivan's wife came out after water, and she also took a hand. Gavrilo's wife rushed out of the room and began to blame her neighbor: she recalled things that had happened, and added things that had never happened. A regular cackle ensued.

All screamed at once, and tried to say two words at a time. Yes, and the words were all bad: "You are such and such," — "you are another," — "you are a thief," — "you are a trollop," — "you starve your old father-in-law," — "you are a beast."

[1] *Baushka*, for *babushka*, old woman or grandmother.

"And you, mean little beggar that you are, you made a hole in my sieve!" — "And you've got our bucket-yoke.[1] I want it back again."

They caught hold of the bucket-yoke, spilt the water, tore off each other's shawls, and began to fight.

Just here Gavrilo came in from the field, and took his wife's part. Ivan and his son rushed over, and they all fell in a heap. Ivan was a strong muzhik, and threw them all in different directions. He tore out a handful of Gavrilo's whiskers. A crowd collected, and it was hard to separate them.

That was the beginning of it.

Gavrilo wrapped up his bunch of whiskers in a piece of writing-paper, and brought suit in the district court.

"I did not grow my beard," says he, "for the sake of letting that pigheaded Vanka pull it out."

And his wife kept telling her neighbors that now they would try Ivan at court, and send him to Siberia; and so the quarrel went on.

From the very first day the old man, as he lay on the oven, tried to pacify them; but the young people would not listen to him. He said to them: —

"Children, you are acting foolishly; and the whole thing started from a piece of foolishness. Just think, the whole trouble is about an egg! Suppose the children did pick up the little egg. Why, let them have it.[2] One egg is n't worth much. God has plenty for all. Well, suppose she did say a bad word; you ought to have corrected it; you ought to have taught her to say better things. Well, you've had your fight — we are all sinners! Such things happen. Now go and make it up, and all will be forgotten! But, if you act out of spite, things will go from bad to worse for you."

The younger ones did not listen; they thought the old man was talking nonsense, and was only grumbling, as old men are apt to do.

Ivan did not give in to his neighbor.

"I did not pull out his whiskers," said he, "he pulled

[1] *Koromuislo*, the yoke which is used for carrying water.

[2] *Nu i Bog s nim;* literally, "Well, and God be with them!"

them out himself; but his son tore out all my eye-hooks, and tore the shirt off my back. Just look at it!"

And Ivan also went to court. The case was tried before the magistrate and at the district court. While they were at law, a bolt was missing from Gavrilo's cart. Gavrilo's women folk accused Ivan's son of stealing it.

"We ourselves saw him go by the window at night," they said, "on his way to the cart; and some one said he stopped at the tavern, and tried to sell the bolt to the tavern-keeper."

Another suit was begun; and at home, every day, there was a new quarrel, a new fight. The little children, imitating their elders, quarreled; and the women, when they met at the river, did not pound so much with their paddles as they clacked with their tongues, and all to no good.

At first the muzhiks only accused each other, but in course of time they actually began to steal whatever happened to be lying round. And the women and children also learned to do the same. Their lives grew constantly worse and worse.

Ivan Shcherbakof and Gavrilo the cripple had their cases tried before the commune, and in the district court, and before the arbiter of the peace, until all the judges were weary of it; Gavrilo would have Ivan fined and put into jail, or Ivan would do the same to Gavrilo. And the more harm they did to each other the angrier they became. When dogs get to fighting, the more they tear each other, the more desperate they become. If some one pounds the dog from behind, he thinks it is the other dog that is biting, and grows madder still. So it was with these muzhiks. They went ahead with their lawsuits: either one or the other would get punished by fine or arrest; and for all that, their hearts were filled with still greater hatred.

"Just wait! I'll get even with you yet!"

Thus their affairs dragged on for six years. Still the old man on the oven kept saying the same thing. He used to try to reason with them:—

"What are you doing, children? Drop all these

doings; don't neglect your business, and don't bear malice; it will be much better. For the angrier you get, the worse it becomes."

Still they paid no attention to the old man.

On the seventh year it came to pass that, at a wedding, Ivan's daughter-in-law insulted Gavrilo in the presence of the people. She began to accuse him of horse-stealing. Gavrilo was drunk; he could not control his temper, and he struck the woman; he hit her so hard that she was confined to her bed for a whole week; but she was in a delicate condition. Ivan was glad of the occurrence, and he went for a warrant at the magistrate's. ....

"Now," said he to himself, "I shall square accounts with my neighbor; he shall not escape prison or Siberia."

But again Ivan lost his case. The magistrate did not accept his petition; the woman was examined; when she got up, there were no marks at all on her. Ivan went to the arbiter of the peace, and the latter transferred the case to the district court. Ivan began to bother the volost;[1] he drank up two or three gallons of mead with the secretary and the elder, and he succeeded in having Gavrilo sentenced to be whipped. They read the sentence to Gavrilo in court. The secretary read it: —

"The court has decided that the peasant Gavrilo Gordyeyef be punished with twenty lashes in presence of the officers of the volost."

Ivan also listened to the sentence, and looked at Gavrilo: "Now, what will he do about it?" Gavrilo listened to it, turned as white as a sheet, turned around, and went out into the vestibule. Ivan followed him and started to go to his horse; but he heard Gavrilo saying: —

"All right," says he; "he will lash my back; it will burn; but something of his may burn worse."

Ivan heard these words, and immediately turned to the judges.

[1] The *volost* is a district comprising several villages, of which the head man is called *starshina*.

"Just judges! he has threatened to set my house on fire! Listen: he said it in the presence of witnesses!"

Gavrilo was called back.

"Is it true you said so?"

"I said nothing. Lash me, since you have the power. It seems that I am the only one to suffer, though I am right; but he's allowed to do anything."

Gavrilo wanted to say more, but his lips and cheeks began to tremble. And he turned his face to the partition. Even the judges were frightened as they looked at Gavrilo. "Now," they think, "suppose he actually makes up his mind to do some harm to his neighbor or himself." And the little old judge began to speak:—

"See here, brothers! you had better make up your minds to become friends again. You, brother Gavrilo, did you do right in striking a woman with child? It is fortunate for you that God spared her, else what a sin you would have committed. Was it right? Confess, and ask his pardon, and he will forgive you. Then we'll change the sentence."

When the secretary heard it, he said:—

"That cannot be done, because, according to the 117th article, there was no peaceful settlement; but the judge's sentence was passed, and the sentence must be carried out."

But the judge did not heed the secretary.

"That will do.... hold your tongue! There is only one article, brother, and that is the first, Remember God; and God has commanded you to become reconciled."

And again the judge tried to persuade the muzhiks, but his words were in vain. Gavrilo would not heed him.

"I am almost fifty years old," he said. "I have a married son, and I was never beaten in all my life; but now this pig-headed Vanka has brought me under the lash, and yet I am to ask his forgiveness, am I? Well, that will do! Only let Vanka look out for me!"

Gavrilo's voice trembled again; he could talk no longer. He turned around and went out.

It was ten versts from the court-house to the dvor,

and it was late when Ivan reached home. The women had already gone to get the cattle. He unharnessed his horses, put things away, and went into the izba. There was no one in the izba. The children had not yet returned from the field, and the women were after the cattle. Ivan went in, sat down on the bench, and became lost in thought.

He remembered how the sentence was read to Gavrilo, and how he turned pale, and faced the partition; and his heart felt oppressed. He imagined himself in the same position, about to receive the punishment of lashes. And he began to pity Gavrilo. And he heard the old man coughing on the oven, then shifting from side to side, stretching out his legs, and then clambering down to the floor. The old man clambered down, dragged himself to the bench, and sat down. The old man found it hard to drag himself to the bench; he coughed and coughed; and when his coughing fit was over, he leaned his elbows on the table, and said: —

"Well, was he sentenced?"

Ivan says: —

"Sentenced to twenty lashes."

The old man shook his head.

"You are doing wrong, Ivan!" says he. "Oh, very wrong! Not to him, but to yourself, you are doing wrong. Now, suppose they lash his back; will it do you any good?"

"He won't do it any more," said Ivan.

"What won't he do any more? Is he doing anything worse than you do?"

"Do you want to know what he has done to me?" asked Ivan. "Why, he nearly killed the woman, and even now he threatened to set the house on fire! Why must I beg his pardon for it?"

The old man sighed, and said: —

"This whole free world is open for you, Ivan, to come and go upon; and because I have been lying on the oven for these last few years, do you think that you see all, and I see nothing. No, young man, you see nothing at all; anger has blinded your eyes. The faults of

others are before you, but your own are behind your back. You say he did wrong; if he were the only man to do wrong, then there would be no wickedness in the world. Does wrong arise among people on account of one man? There must be two in a quarrel. You can see his sins, but you can't see your own. Had he been the only one to do wrong, and you had done right, there would have been no quarrel. Who pulled out his beard? Who threw down his hayrick? Who dragged him around in the courts? and yet you blame him for everything! Your own life is wrong, and that is bad. That is n't the way I used to live, brother; that is n't what I taught you. Is that the way the old man, his father, and I used to live? How did we live? Like good neighbors. If he was out of flour, the wife would come — 'Uncle Frol, we are out of flour.' — 'Just go to the closet, young woman, and get what you need.' He had no one to tend to the horses — 'Go, Vanyatka,[1] and take care of his horses.' And whatever I was short of, I would go to him — 'Uncle Gordyeï, I need such and such a thing.' — 'Take it, Uncle Frol!' And so it used to go with us. And it used to be the same nice way with you. And how is it now? Here, lately, a soldier was telling about Plevna; well, your quarrel is worse than that of Plevna. Is this living? It 's a sin! You are a muzhik, you are master of a house. You will have to answer for it. What are you teaching your women and children to do? To fight like dogs! The other day, Taraska, that dirty-nosed rascal, was abusing Aunt Arina before his mother, and his mother was laughing at it. Is that good? You 'll have to answer for it. Just think about your soul. Ought things to go on this way? You give me a word — I give you two back; you give me a slap — I give back two. No, my dear. Christ went about on earth, but He did not teach us fools such things. If a word is said to you, hold your peace: his own conscience will accuse him. That is the way He taught us, batyushka. If any one slap you, turn the other cheek: 'Here, strike, if I am worth it.' And his conscience will

[1] Diminished diminutive of Ivan.

prick him. He will grow humble, and hear what you have to say. That is the way He commanded us, but not to be stiff-necked. Why don't you say something? am I not telling you the truth?"

Ivan said nothing — he was listening.

The old man had a fit of coughing, raised some phlegm, and began to speak again.

"Do you think that what Christ taught us is wrong? It was intended for us for our good. Think about your earthly life: has it been good, or bad, for you since this Plevna began between you? Just count up how much you have lost by these lawsuits, your traveling expenses, and all you have spent in eating. Those sons of yours are growing like young eagles: you ought to be living and enjoying life, and 'climb the mountain'; and here you are losing what you have! And why is it? It is all for nothing! All because of your pride! You ought to go with your children, and work in the field, and do the planting yourself; but the devil drives you off, either to the judge or to some pettifogger. You don't plow at the right time, you don't plant at the right time, and our little mother[1] does not bring forth her fruit. Why were there no oats this year? When did you sow them? When you came from town! And what did you gain at law? You got in up to your neck! Ekh! you foolish fellow! just attend to business. Work with your boys in the field and house; and if any one insults you, then forgive them in God's name; and you will be far better off, and your heart will feel much easier."

Ivan said nothing.

"Just see here, Vanya! Listen to me: I am an old man. Go and harness the roan, go right back to court again, have all your cases dismissed, and in the morning go to Gavrilo, beg his forgiveness in God's name, invite him to the house, — to-morrow is a holiday" — this happened to be in September, just before the Birthday of the Virgin, — "light the samovarchik,[2] bring out a bottle and clear up all the sins so that they may not happen again, and tell the babas and the children to do the same."

[1] The earth. [2] Little tea-urn.

Ivan sighed, and thought, "The old man says right," and his heart softened; only he did not know how to begin, how to become reconciled now.

And the old man began again, as if he read his thoughts.

"Go ahead, Vanya! don't put it off. Put out the fire when it first begins; but when it burns up, it is hard to do it."

The old man started to say something more, but he did not finish; the women came into the izba, and chattered like magpies. All the news had reached them, — how Gavrilo had been sentenced to be lashed, and how he had threatened to set their house on fire. They had heard everything, and they made their own additions; and they had already succeeded in getting into a new quarrel with Gavrilo's women folks in the pasture.

They began to tell how Gavrilo's daughter-in-law had threatened to set the marshal on them. The marshal, it seemed, took Gavrilo's part. He would reverse the whole case; and the school-teacher, it seemed, had written a second petition to the Tsar himself, against Ivan, and put in the petition all the things, about the bolt, and about the garden, and half of the farm would now be given to them.

As Ivan listened to their speeches, his heart grew hard again, and he changed his mind about becoming reconciled with Gavrilo.

The farmer always has many things to do about his place. Ivan did not stop to talk to the women, but he got up and left the izba; he went to the threshing-floor and to the shed. Before he had finished his work and returned to the yard, the little sun was already set; the boys, too, had come in from the field. The two had been plowing for the spring corn. Ivan met them, asked them about their work; he helped them put away their tools, laid aside the torn horse-collar; he was going also to put away the poles under the shed, but it had already become quite dark.

Ivan left the poles till the next day, but he fed the cattle; he opened the gates, and let Taraska and his

horses out into the street to go to the pasture for the night, and shut them again, and put the board under the gate.

"Now for supper and bed," thought Ivan, as he picked up the torn collar and went into the izba.

By this time he had forgotten all about Gavrilo, and all that his father had said to him. Before he had taken hold of the door-knob, and entered the vestibule, he heard his neighbor from behind the fence scolding against some one, in a hoarse voice. "For this I call him a devil," cried Gavrilo, addressing some one.

"He ought to be killed!"

When Ivan heard these words, all his former anger against his neighbor flamed up in him. He stood for a while and listened while Gavrilo was scolding. When Gavrilo became quiet, Ivan went into the izba. When he entered, the room was lighted up. The young woman was sitting in one corner with her spinning-wheel, the old woman was getting supper, the oldest son was twisting cloth around his lapti.[1] The second one was sitting by the table with a little book. Taraska was going out for the night.

In the izba, all had been pleasant, comfortable, if it had not been for this annoyance — a bad neighbor.

Ivan came in angry, pushed the cat from the bench, scolded the women because the slop-pail was not in the right place. Ivan felt discouraged; he sat down, frowned, and began to mend the horse-collar; and Gavrilo's words kept rising in his mind, how he threatened him at court, and how he just shouted in a hoarse voice about some one, "He ought to be killed!"

The old woman prepared supper for Taraska; he ate it, put on his sheepskin shubyonka and his kaftan, tightened his belt, took some bread, and went out to the horses. His older brother intended to see him out; but Ivan rose, and went to the front steps.

[1] *Lapti* are the wooden sandals worn by the peasants of Great Russia and White Russia instead of boots, — the leg being wrapped up in rags or cloths, and fastened with strings. One of the Russian poets sings, "*Staranis sapogi, lapti gulaiut;*" — "Away with boots, let the lapti have full sway;" that is, the peasant will sometimes have his share in the world's fun. — ED.

It was already beginning to grow quite dark out of doors; the clouds covered the sky, and a wind sprang up. Ivan descended the steps, helped his son to mount, stirred up the little colt, then he stood for a while looking and listening as Taraska galloped down through the village, as he greeted the other boys, and as they all went out of hearing distance. Ivan stood long at the gate, and Gavrilo's words did not leave his mind: —

"Something of his may burn worse."

"He would not take pity on himself," thought Ivan. "Everything is dried up, and there is a wind besides. He might get in from the rear, start a fire, and all would be up with us; the villain might burn us up, and not get caught. Now, if I could only catch him, he would not get off so easy."

And thus it occurred to Ivan not to go back by the front way, but to go straight into the street, and behind the gate.

"No, I 'll go round the dvor. Who knows what he 's up to now?"

And Ivan crept quietly alongside of the gates. Just as he turned around the corner, and looked in the direction of the fence, it seemed to him that he saw something move in the corner, as if some one stuck his head out and then hid again.

Ivan stood still, and held his breath. He listened, and strained his eyes; all was quiet; only the wind was rustling the little leaves on the twigs, and whistling in the straw-heap. At first it was as dark as a pocket.[1] But soon his eyes got accustomed to the darkness; and Ivan could see the whole corner, and the sokha-plow, and the sloping roof. He stood for a while, and gazed, but there was no one to be seen.

"It must have been a deception," thought Ivan; "still, I will make a turn around."

And he went stealthily alongside the shed. Ivan crept softly, in his lapti, so that he could not hear his own steps. He reached the corner, and lo! at the very farther end something near the plow flashed up and

[1] Literally, "as if an eye were taken out."

instantly vanished again. A pang seized Ivan's heart, and he stood still. He had scarcely stopped before a brighter light flashed up in the same place, and a man with a cap on was plainly seen squatting down with his back turned, and was trying to kindle a bundle of straw that he held in his hand.

Ivan's heart began to flutter in his breast like a bird; and he braced himself up, and advanced with long steps, but so cautiously that he himself could not hear them.

"There," says he to himself, "I've got him now; I've caught him in the very act."

But before Ivan had gone two more steps, suddenly something flared up brightly, — brightly, but in an entirely different place; and it was no small fire, either; and the straw blazed up under the pent-roof, and began to spread toward the house; and then Gavrilo was seen standing in the light.

Like a hawk on a sparrow, Ivan threw himself on the cripple.

"I'll choke the life out of him! he won't escape me this time," he says to himself.

But the cripple must have heard his steps; he looked around, and, in spite of his lameness, leaped like a rabbit along by the shed.

"You shan't escape!" shouted Ivan, and he flew after him.

But just as he was about to get him by the collar, Gavrilo slipped from under his hand, and Ivan caught him by the coat-tail. The coat-tail tore out, and Ivan fell. Ivan leaped to his feet. "Help! Catch him!" And he started after him again.

But, by the time he got to his feet, Gavrilo was already at his own dvor; but Ivan caught up with him, even then. But, as he tried to lay hands on him, something struck him on the head, as if a stone had hit his temple. It was Gavrilo, who had picked up an oak stave; and when Ivan came up to him, he struck him on the head with all his force.

Ivan saw stars; everything grew dark; he staggered, and fell senseless.

When he came to, Gavrilo was gone; it was as light as day; in the direction of his yard there was a noise like a machine, a crackling and roaring. Ivan turned around, and saw that the back shed was already gone, that the side shed was on fire, and the flame and smoke and burning straw were drifting toward the izba.

"What does this mean? Bratsui!"[1] exclaimed Ivan, lifting his hand and slapping his thigh. "All it needs, is to pull down the pent-roof, and trample it out. What does it mean, bratsui?" he repeated.

He tried to shout, but he had no breath; his voice stuck in his throat. He tried to run, but his feet refused to move; they tripped each other up. He merely walked and staggered; again his breath failed him. He stood for a moment, got his wind, and then started again. While he was making his way round to the shed, and getting to the fire, the side shed also burned to the ground, and the corner of the izba and the gates caught fire. The flames poured up from the izba, and all entrance to the yard was cut off. A great crowd gathered, but nothing could be done. The neighbors were carrying out their own effects, and driving their cattle out of their yards.

After Ivan's dvor had burned up, Gavrilo's took fire; the wind arose, and carried the fire across the street. Half the village was destroyed.

From Ivan's house the old man was rescued with difficulty, and his people rushed out with only the clothes they had on. Everything else was burned, with the exception of the horses which had gone to the night-pasture. All the cattle were destroyed. The poultry were burned on their roosts; the carts, the plows, the harrows, the women's boxes, the corn and wheat in the granary, — everything was destroyed.

Gavrilo's cattle were rescued, and a few of his effects were removed in safety.

The fire lasted all night long. Ivan stood by his dvor, and gazed, and kept repeating, "What does this

[1] *Bratsui*, brothers! an exclamation.

mean? Bratsui! All it needs, is to pull it down, and trample it out."

But when the ceiling of his izba fell in, he crept up close to the fire, caught hold of a burning beam, and tried to pull it out. The women saw him, and began to call him back; but he pulled the beam out, and went back after another, but staggered, and fell into the fire.

Then his son dashed in after him, and pulled him out. Ivan's beard and hair were burned off, his clothes were scorched, his hands were ruined, and yet he did not notice it.

"He has lost his wits from grief," said the crowd.

The fire began to die down; and Ivan still stood in the same place, and kept repeating, "Bratsui! Only pull it down!"

In the morning the starosta sent his son after Ivan.

"Uncle Ivan, your father is dying; he wants you to come and say good-by."

Ivan had forgotten all about his father, and did not comprehend what they said to him.

"What father?" says he; "wants whom?"

"He wants you to come and bid him good-by; he is dying in our izba. Come, let us go, Uncle Ivan," said the village elder's son, and took him by the arm. Ivan followed the starosta's son.

The old man, when he was rescued, was surrounded by burning straw, and was badly burned. He was taken to the starosta's, at the farther end of the village. That part of the village was not burned.

When Ivan came to his father, there was no one in the izba except a little old woman, — the starosta's wife, — and some children on the oven. All the rest were at the fire. The old man was lying on the bench with a little candle in his hand, and was gazing at the door. When his son entered, he started. The old woman went to him, and told him that his son had come. He asked him to come nearer. Ivan approached, and the old man said: —

"Well, Vanyatka,"[1] he said, "I told you so. Who burned up the village?"

"He did, batyushka," said Ivan. "He did! I myself caught him at it. Right before my eyes he touched off the roof. All I needed to do was to pull out the bunch of burning straw, trample it down, and it would never have happened."

"Ivan," said the old man, "my death has come; you, too, will have to die. Whose sin was it?"

Ivan looked at his father, and said nothing. He could not utter a word.

"Tell me in God's presence! Whose sin was it? What did I tell you?"

Only at this moment Ivan came to himself, and comprehended all. He began to snuffle with his nose, and said:—

"Mine, batyushka!" and he fell on his knees before his father, began to weep, and said:—

"Forgive me, batyushka; I am guilty before you and before God."

The old man waved his arms, took the candle in his left hand, and pointed with his right to his forehead; tried to cross himself, but failed to lift it high enough, and stopped short.

"Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee, O Lord!" he said, and then he turned his eyes on his son.

"But Vanka, Vanka!"

"What is it, batyushka?"

"What ought you to do now?"

Ivan kept on weeping.

"I don't know, batyushka," he said. "How are we going to live now, batyushka?"

The old man shut his eyes, moved his lips, as if he were trying to gather his strength; and then he opened his eyes again, and said:—

"You will get along! if you live with God—you will get along."

The old man stopped speaking, and smiled, and said:—

[1] Affectionate diminutive of Ivan; like Vanka, Vanyusha, Vanyushka. Ivan is colloquial for Ioann, John.

"Look here, Vanya! don't tell who set the fire. Hide your neighbor's sin, and God will forgive two."

The old man took the candle in both his hands, held them crossed on his breast, sighed, stretched himself, and died.

Ivan did not expose Gavrilo, and no one knew what was the cause of the fire.

And Ivan's heart grew soft toward Gavrilo, and Gavrilo was surprised because Ivan did not tell any one about him.

At first Gavrilo was afraid of him, but afterward he got accustomed to it. The muzhiks ceased to quarrel, their families also. While they were rebuilding, both families lived in one dvor; and when the village was restored, and the dvors were put at a greater distance apart, Ivan and Gavrilo again became neighbors in one nest.

And Ivan and Gavrilo lived in neighborly fashion, just as the old men had formerly lived. And Ivan Shcherbakof remembered the old man's advice, and God's proof that a fire ought to be quenched at the beginning.

And if any one ever did him any harm, he made no attempt to retaliate, but tried to arrange things; and if any one ever called him a bad name, he did not try to outdo him in his reply, but he tried to teach him not to say bad things; and thus he taught the women and children of his household; and thus Ivan Shcherbakof reformed, and began to live better than before.

WHERE LOVE IS, THERE GOD IS ALSO

(1885)

IN the city lived the shoemaker, Martuin Avdyeitch. He lived in a basement, in a little room with one window. The window looked out on the street. Through the window he used to watch the people passing by; although only their feet could be seen, yet by the boots Martuin Avdyeitch recognized the people. Martuin Avdyeitch had lived long in one place, and had many acquaintances. Few pairs of boots in his district had not been in his hands once and again. Some he would half-sole, some he would patch, some he would stitch around, and occasionally he would also put on new uppers. And through the window he often recognized his work.

Avdyeitch had plenty to do, because he was a faithful workman, used good material, did not make exorbitant charges, and kept his word. If it was possible for him to finish an order by a certain time, he would accept it; otherwise, he would not deceive you, — he would tell you so beforehand. And all knew Avdyeitch, and he was never out of work.

Avdyeitch had always been a good man; but as he grew old, he began to think more about his soul, and get nearer to God. Martuin's wife had died when he was still living with his master. His wife left him a boy three years old. None of their other children had lived. All the eldest had died in childhood. Martuin at first intended to send his little son to his sister in the village, but afterward he felt sorry for him; he thought to himself: —

"It will be hard for my Kapitoshka to live in a strange family. I shall keep him with me."

And Avdyeitch left his master, and went into lodgings with his little son. But God gave Avdyeitch no luck with his children. As Kapitoshka grew older, he began to help his father, and would have been a delight to him, but a sickness fell on him, he went to bed, suffered a week, and died. Martuin buried his son, and fell into despair. So deep was this despair that he began to complain of God. Martuin fell into such a melancholy state, that more than once he prayed to God for death, and reproached God because He had not taken him who was an old man, instead of his beloved only son. Avdyeitch also ceased to go to church.

And once a little old man from the same district came from Troïtsa[1] to see Avdyeitch; for seven years he had been wandering about. Avdyeitch talked with him, and began to complain about his sorrows.

"I have no desire to live any longer," he said: "I only wish I was dead. That is all I pray God for. I am a man without anything to hope for now."

And the little old man said to him: —

"You don't talk right, Martuin: we must not judge God's doings. The world moves, not by our skill, but by God's will. God decreed for your son to die, — for you — to live. So it is for the best. And you are in despair, because you wish to live for your own happiness."

"But what shall one live for?" asked Martuin.

And the little old man said: —

"We must live for God, Martuin. He gives you life, and for His sake you must live. When you begin to live for Him, you will not grieve over anything, and all will seem easy to you."

Martuin kept silent for a moment, and then said, "But how can one live for God?"

And the little old man said: —

"Christ has taught us how to live for God. You know how to read? Buy a Testament, and read it; there you

[1] Trinity, a famous monastery, pilgrimage to which is reckoned a virtue. Avdyeitch calls this *zemlyak-starichok*, *Bozhi chelovyek*, God's man. — Ed.

will learn how to live for God. Everything is explained there."

And these words kindled a fire in Avdyeitch's heart. And he went that very same day, bought a New Testament in large print, and began to read.

At first Avdyeitch intended to read only on holidays; but as he began to read, it so cheered his soul that he used to read every day. At times he would become so absorbed in reading, that all the kerosene in the lamp would burn out, and still he could not tear himself away. And so Avdyeitch used to read every evening.

And the more he read, the clearer he understood what God wanted of him, and how one should live for God; and his heart kept growing easier and easier. Formerly, when he lay down to sleep, he used to sigh and groan, and always thought of his Kapitoshka; and now his only exclamation was: —

"Glory to Thee! glory to Thee, Lord! Thy will be done."

And from that time Avdyeitch's whole life was changed. In other days he, too, used to drop into a public-house[1] as a holiday amusement, to drink a cup of tea; and he was not averse to a little brandy either. He would take a drink with some acquaintance, and leave the saloon, not intoxicated exactly, yet in a happy frame of mind, and inclined to talk nonsense, and shout, and use abusive language at a person. Now he left off that sort of thing. His life became quiet and joyful. In the morning he would sit down to work, finish his allotted task, then take the little lamp from the hook, put it on the table, get his book from the shelf, open it, and sit down to read. And the more he read, the more he understood, and the brighter and happier it grew in his heart.

Once it happened that Martuin read till late into the night. He was reading the Gospel of Luke. He was reading over the sixth chapter; and he was reading the verses: —

"*And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak*

[1] *Traktir.*

forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

He read farther also those verses, where God speaks:

"*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.*"

Avdyeitch read these words, and joy filled his soul. He took off his spectacles, put them down on the book, leaned his elbows on the table, and became lost in thought. And he began to measure his life by these words. And he thought to himself:—

"Is my house built on the rock, or on the sand? 'T is well if on the rock. It is so easy when you are alone by yourself; it seems as if you had done everything as God commands; but when you forget yourself, you sin again. Yet I shall still struggle on. It is very good. Help me, Lord!"

Thus ran his thoughts; he wanted to go to bed, but he felt loath to tear himself away from the book. And he began to read farther in the seventh chapter. He read about the centurion, he read about the widow's son, he read about the answer given to John's disciples, and finally he came to that place where the rich Pharisee desired the Lord to sit at meat with him; and he read how the woman that was a sinner anointed His feet, and washed them with her tears, and how He forgave her. He reached the forty-fourth verse, and began to read:—

"*And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon,*

Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

He finished reading these verses, and thought to himself: —

"*Thou gavest me no water for my feet, thou gavest me no kiss. My head with oil thou didst not anoint.*"

And again Avdyeitch took off his spectacles, put them down on the book, and again he became lost in thought.

"It seems that Pharisee must have been such a man as I am. I, too, apparently have thought only of myself, — how I might have my tea, be warm and comfortable, but never to think about my guest. He thought about himself, but there was not the least care taken of the guest. And who was his guest? The Lord Himself. If He had come to me, should I have done the same way?"

Avdyeitch rested his head upon both his arms, and did not notice that he fell asleep.

"Martuin!" suddenly seemed to sound in his ears.

Martuin started from his sleep: —

"Who is here?"

He turned around, glanced toward the door — no one.

Again he fell into a doze. Suddenly he plainly heard: —

"Martuin! Ah, Martuin! look to-morrow on the street. I am coming."

Martuin awoke, rose from the chair, began to rub his eyes. He himself could not tell whether he heard those words in his dream, or in reality. He turned down his lamp, and went to bed.

At daybreak next morning, Avdyeitch rose, made his prayer to God, lighted the stove, put on the shchi[1] and

[1] Cabbage-soup.

the kasha,[1] put the water in the samovar, put on his apron, and sat down by the window to work.

And while he was working, he kept thinking about all that had happened the day before. It seemed to him at one moment that it was a dream, and now he had really heard a voice.

"Well," he said to himself, "such things have been."

Martuin was sitting by the window, and looking out more than he was working. When any one passed by in boots which he did not know, he would bend down, look out of the window, in order to see, not only the feet, but also the face.

The dvornik [2] passed by in new felt boots,[3] the water-carrier passed by; then there came up to the window an old soldier of Nicholas's time, in an old pair of laced felt boots, with a shovel in his hands. Avdyeitch recognized him by his felt boots. The old man's name was Stepanuitch; and a neighboring merchant, out of charity, gave him a home with him. He was required to assist the dvornik. Stepanuitch began to shovel away the snow from in front of Avdyeitch's window. Avdyeitch glanced at him, and took up his work again.

"Pshaw! I must be getting crazy in my old age," said Avdyeitch, and laughed at himself. "Stepanuitch is clearing away the snow, and I imagine that Christ is coming to see me. I was entirely out of my mind, old dotard that I am!"

Avdyeitch sewed about a dozen stitches, and then felt impelled to look through the window again. He looked out again through the window, and saw that Stepanuitch had leaned his shovel against the wall, and was warming himself, and resting. He was an old broken-down man; evidently he had not strength enough even to shovel the snow. Avdyeitch said to himself: —

"I will give him some tea; by the way, the samovar has only just gone out." Avdyeitch laid down his awl, rose from his seat, put the samovar on the table, poured out the tea, and tapped with his finger at the glass.

[1] Gruel. [2] House-porter. [3] *Valenki.*

Stepanuitch turned around, and came to the window. Avdyeitch beckoned to him, and went to open the door.

"Come in, warm yourself a little," he said. "You must be cold."

"May Christ reward you for this! my bones ache," said Stepanuitch.

Stepanuitch came in, and shook off the snow, tried to wipe his feet, so as not to soil the floor, but staggered.

"Don't trouble to wipe your feet. I will clean it up myself; we are used to such things. Come in and sit down," said Avdyeitch. "Here, drink a cup of tea."

And Avdyeitch filled two glasses, and handed one to his guest; while he himself poured his tea into a saucer, and began to blow it.

Stepanuitch finished drinking his glass of tea, turned the glass upside down,[1] put the half-eaten lump of sugar on it, and began to express his thanks. But it was evident he wanted some more.

"Have some more," said Avdyeitch, filling both his own glass and his guest's. Avdyeitch drank his tea, but from time to time glanced out into the street.

"Are you expecting any one?" asked his guest.

"Am I expecting any one? I am ashamed even to tell whom I expect. I am, and I am not, expecting some one; but one word has kindled a fire in my heart. Whether it is a dream, or something else, I do not know. Don't you see, brother, I was reading yesterday the Gospel about Christ the Batyushka; how He suffered, how He walked on the earth. I suppose you have heard about it?"

"Indeed I have," replied Stepanuitch; "but we are people in darkness, we can't read."

"Well, now, I was reading about that very thing, — how He walked on the earth; I read, you know, how He came to the Pharisee, and the Pharisee did not treat Him hospitably. Well, and so, my brother, I was reading yesterday, about this very thing, and was thinking to myself how he did not receive Christ the Batyushka, with honor. Suppose, for example, He should come to me, or

[1] To signify he was satisfied; a custom among the Russians. — ED.

any one else, I said to myself, I should not even know how to receive Him. And he gave Him no reception at all. Well! while I was thus thinking, I fell asleep, brother, and I heard some one call me by name. I got up; the voice, just as if some one whispered, said, 'Be on the watch; I shall come to-morrow.' And this happened twice. Well! would you believe it, it got into my head? I scolded myself — and yet I am expecting Him, the Batyushka."

Stepanuitch shook his head, and said nothing; he finished drinking his glass of tea, and put it on the side; but Avdyeitch picked up the glass again, and filled it once more.

"Drink some more for your good health. You see, I have an idea that, when the Batyushka went about on this earth, He disdained no one, and had more to do with the simple people. He always went to see the simple people. He picked out His disciples more from among folk like such sinners as we are, from the working-class. Said He, whoever exalts himself, shall be humbled, and he who is humbled shall become exalted. Said He, you call me Lord, and, said He, I wash your feet. Whoever wishes, said He, to be the first, the same shall be a servant to all. Because, said He, blessed are the poor, the humble, the kind, the generous."

And Stepanuitch forgot about his tea; he was an old man, and easily moved to tears. He was listening, and the tears rolled down his face.

"Come, now, have some more tea," said Avdyeitch; but Stepanuitch made the sign of the cross, thanked him, turned down his glass, and arose.

"Thanks to you," he says, "Martuin Avdyeitch, for treating me kindly, and satisfying me, soul and body."

"You are welcome; come in again; always glad to see a friend," said Avdyeitch.

Stepanuitch departed; and Martuin poured out the rest of the tea, drank it up, put away the dishes, and sat down again by the window to work, to stitch on a patch. He kept stitching away, and at the same time looking through the window. He was expecting Christ, and was

all the while thinking of Him and His deeds, and his head was filled with the different speeches of Christ.

Two soldiers passed by: one wore boots furnished by the crown, and the other one, boots that he had made; then the master[1] of the next house passed by in shining galoshes; then a baker with a basket passed by. All passed by; and now there came also by the window a woman in woolen stockings and rustic bashmaks on her feet. She passed by the window, and stood still near the window-case.

Avdyeitch looked up at her from the window, and saw it was a stranger, a woman poorly clad, and with a child; she was standing by the wall with her back to the wind, trying to wrap up the child, and she had nothing to wrap it up in. The woman was dressed in shabby summer clothes; and from behind the frame, Avdyeitch could hear the child crying, and the woman trying to pacify it; but she was not able to pacify it.

Avdyeitch got up, went to the door, ascended the steps, and cried:—

"My good woman. Hey! my good woman!"[2]

The woman heard him and turned around.

"Why are you standing in the cold with the child? Come into my room, where it is warm; you can manage it better. Here, this way!"

The woman was astonished. She saw an old, old man, in an apron, with spectacles on his nose, calling her to him. She followed him. They descended the steps and entered the room; the old man led the woman to his bed.

"There," says he, "sit down, my good woman, nearer to the stove; you can get warm, and nurse the little one."

"I have no milk for him. I myself have not eaten anything since morning," said the woman; but, nevertheless, she took the baby to her breast.

Avdyeitch shook his head, went to the table, brought out the bread and a dish, opened the oven-door, poured into the dish some cabbage-soup, took out the pot with

[1] *Khozyaïn.* [2] *Umnitsa aumnitsa!* literally, clever one.

the gruel, but it was not cooked as yet; so he filled the dish with shchi only, and put it on the table. He got the bread, took the towel down from the hook, and spread it upon the table.

"Sit down," he says, "and eat, my good woman; and I will mind the little one. You see, I once had children of my own; I know how to handle them."

The woman crossed herself, sat down at the table, and began to eat; while Avdyeitch took a seat on the bed near the infant. Avdyeitch kept smacking and smacking to it with his lips; but it was a poor kind of smacking, for he had no teeth. The little one kept on crying. And it occurred to Avdyeitch to threaten the little one with his finger; he waved, waved his finger right before the child's mouth, and hastily withdrew it. He did not put it to its mouth, because his finger was black, and soiled with wax. And the little one looked at his finger, and became quiet; then it began to smile, and Avdyeitch also was glad. While the woman was eating, she told who she was, and whither she was going.

Said she: —

"I am a soldier's wife. It is now seven months since they sent my husband away off, and no tidings. I lived out as cook; the baby was born; no one cared to keep me with a child. This is the third month that I have been struggling along without a place. I ate up all I had. I wanted to engage as a wet-nurse — no one would take me — I am too thin, they say. I have just been to the merchant's wife, where lives a young woman I know, and so they promised to take us in. I thought that was the end of it. But she told me to come next week. And she lives a long way off. I got tired out; and it tired him too, my heart's darling. Fortunately our landlady takes pity on us for the sake of Christ, and gives us a room, else I don't know how I should manage to get along."

Avdyeitch sighed, and said: —

"Have n't you any warm clothes?"

"Now is the time, friend, to wear warm clothes; but

yesterday I pawned my last shawl for a twenty-kopek piece." [1]

The woman came to the bed, and took the child; and Avdyeitch rose, went to the partition, rummaged round, and succeeded in finding an old coat.

"Na!" says he; "it is a poor thing, yet you may turn it to some use."

The woman looked at the coat and looked at the old man; she took the coat, and burst into tears; and Avdyeitch turned away his head; crawling under the bed, he pushed out a little trunk, rummaged in it, and sat down again opposite the woman.

And the woman said: —

"May Christ bless you, little grandfather! [2] He must have sent me to your window. My little baby would have frozen to death. When I started out it was warm, but now it has grown cold. And He, the Batyushka, led you to look through the window and take pity on me, an unfortunate."

Avdyeitch smiled, and said: —

"Indeed, He did that! I have been looking through the window, my good woman, for some wise reason."

And Martuin told the soldier's wife his dream, and how he heard the voice, — how the Lord promised to come and see him that day.

"All things are possible," said the woman. She rose, put on the coat, wrapped up her little child in it; and, as she started to take leave, she thanked Avdyeitch again.

"Take this, for Christ's sake," said Avdyeitch, giving her a twenty-kopek piece; "redeem your shawl."

She made the sign of the cross, and Avdyeitch made the sign of the cross and went with her to the door.

The woman went away. Avdyeitch ate some shchi, washed the dishes, and sat down again to work. While he was working he still remembered the window; when the window grew darker he immediately looked out to

[1] *Dvagrivennui*, silver, worth sixteen cents.
[2] *Diedushka*.

see who was passing by. Acquaintances passed by and strangers passed by, and there was nothing out of the ordinary.

But here Avdyeitch saw that an old apple-woman had stopped in front of his window. She carried a basket with apples. Only a few were left, as she had evidently sold them nearly all out; and over her shoulder she had a bag full of chips. She must have gathered them up in some new building, and was on her way home. One could see that the bag was heavy on her shoulder; she tried to shift it to the other shoulder. So she lowered the bag on the sidewalk, stood the basket with the apples on a little post, and began to shake down the splinters in the bag. And while she was shaking her bag, a little boy in a torn cap came along, picked up an apple from the basket, and was about to make his escape; but the old woman noticed it, turned around, and caught the youngster by his sleeve. The little boy began to struggle, tried to tear himself away; but the old woman grasped him with both hands, knocked off his cap, and caught him by the hair.

The little boy was screaming, the old woman was scolding. Avdyeitch lost no time in putting away his awl; he threw it upon the floor, sprang to the door, — he even stumbled on the stairs, and dropped his spectacles, — and rushed out into the street.

The old woman was pulling the youngster by his hair, and was scolding, and threatening to take him to the policeman; the youngster was defending himself, and denying the charge.

"I did not take it," he said; "what are you licking me for? Let me go!"

Avdyeitch tried to separate them. He took the boy by his arm, and said: —

"Let him go, babushka; forgive him, for Christ's sake."

"I will forgive him so that he won't forget it till the new broom grows. I am going to take the little villain to the police."

Avdyeitch began to entreat the old woman: —

"Let him go, babushka," he said, "he will never do it again. Let him go, for Christ's sake."

The old woman let him loose; the boy started to run, but Avdyeitch kept him back.

"Ask the babushka's forgiveness," he said, "and don't you ever do it again; I saw you take the apple."

The boy burst into tears, and began to ask forgiveness.

"There now! that 's right; and here 's an apple for you."

And Avdyeitch took an apple from the basket, and gave it to the boy.

"I will pay you for it, babushka," he said to the old woman.

"You ruin them that way, the good-for-nothings," said the old woman. "He ought to be treated so that he would remember it for a whole week."

"Eh, babushka, babushka," said Avdyeitch, "that is right according to our judgment, but not according to God's. If he is to be whipped for an apple, then what ought to be done to us for our sins?"

The old woman was silent.

And Avdyeitch told her the parable of the master who forgave a debtor all that he owed him, and how the debtor went and began to choke one who owed him.

The old woman listened, and the boy stood listening.

"God has commanded us to forgive," said Avdyeitch, "else we, too, may not be forgiven. All should be forgiven, and the thoughtless especially."

The old woman shook her head, and sighed.

"That 's so," said she; "but the trouble is that they are very much spoiled."

"Then, we who are older must teach them," said Avdyeitch.

"That 's just what I say," remarked the old woman. "I myself have had seven of them, — only one daughter is left."

And the old woman began to relate where and how she lived with her daughter, and how many grandchildren she had. "Here," she says, "my strength is only so-so, and yet I have to work. I pity the youngsters —

my grandchildren — but what nice children they are! No one gives me such a welcome as they do. Aksintka won't go to any one but me. 'Babushka, dear babushka, loveliest.'"

And the old woman grew quite sentimental.

"Of course, it is a childish trick. God be with him," said she, pointing to the boy.

The woman was just about to lift the bag up on her shoulder, when the boy ran up, and said: —

"Let me carry it, babushka; it is on my way."

The old woman nodded her head, and put the bag on the boy's back.

And side by side they passed along the street.

And the old woman even forgot to ask Avdyeitch to pay for the apple. Avdyeitch stood motionless, and kept gazing after them; and he heard them talking all the time as they walked away. After Avdyeitch saw them disappear, he returned to his room; he found his eye-glasses on the stairs, — they were not broken; he picked up his awl, and sat down to work again.

After working a little while, it grew darker, so that he could not see to sew; he saw the lamplighter passing by to light the street-lamps.

"It must be time to make a light," he said to himself; so he got his little lamp ready, hung it up, and betook himself again to his work. He had one boot already finished; he turned it around, looked at it: "Well done." He put away his tools, swept off the cuttings, cleared off the bristles and ends, took the lamp, set it on the table, and took down the Gospels from the shelf. He intended to open the book at the very place where he had yesterday put a piece of leather as a mark, but it happened to open at another place; and the moment Avdyeitch opened the Testament, he recollected his last night's dream. And as soon as he remembered it, it seemed as if he heard some one stepping about behind him. Avdyeitch looked around, and saw — there, in the dark corner, it seemed as if people were standing; he was at a loss to know who they were. And a voice whispered in his ear: —

"Martuin — ah, Martuin! did you not recognize me?"

"Who?" exclaimed Avdyeitch.

"Me," repeated the voice. "It was I;" and Stepanuitch stepped forth from the dark corner; he smiled, and like a little cloud faded away, and soon vanished. ....

"And it was I," said the voice.

From the dark corner stepped forth the woman with her child; the woman smiled, the child laughed, and they also vanished.

"And it was I," continued the voice; both the old woman and the boy with the apple stepped forward; both smiled and vanished.

Avdyeitch's soul rejoiced; he crossed himself, put on his spectacles, and began to read the Evangelists where it happened to open. On the upper part of the page he read: —

"*For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in.*" ....

And on the lower part of the page he read this: —

"*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*" (St. Matthew, chap. xxv.).

And Avdyeitch understood that his dream had not deceived him; that the Saviour really called on him that day, and that he really received Him.

A CANDLE

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." — MATT. v. 38, 39.

THIS affair took place in the days when there were masters. There used to be all kinds of masters. There were those who remembered God, and that they must die, and took pity on people; and there were dogs, — excuse the use of the term. But there was nothing worse than the *nachalniks*, or stewards, who had risen from serfdom. As it were, out of the mud, they became princes! And they made life worse than anything else.

There happened to be such a *prikashchik*, or overseer, on a proprietor's estate. The peasants worked their share for the estate. There was plenty of land, and the land was good, — there was water, and meadows, and woodland. There was enough, and to spare, for master and peasants; but the master made one of his house-serfs from another estate the overseer.

This overseer took the power into his hands, and sat upon the necks of the muzhiks. He himself had a family, — a wife, and two married daughters, — and he had made money. He might easily have lived without sin; but he was a covetous man, and fell into sin. He began to compel the muzhiks to work on the barin's estate more than their regular allotment. He started a brickyard; he wore out all the peasants, both women and men, and sold the bricks.

The muzhiks went to complain to the proprietor at Moscow, but they had no success. He dismissed the muzhiks without any satisfaction, and did not curb the overseer's power. The prikashchik learned that

the muzhiks had been to complain of him, and he began to vent his spite on them so that they were worse off than before. There happened to be false men among the muzhiks, who used to carry stories about one another. And all the people were in a ferment, and the overseer kept growing worse and worse.

As time went on, the overseer became so bad that the people came to fear him worse than a terrible wild beast. When he passed through the village, all would keep out of his way as from a wolf, hiding wherever they could, so as to keep away from his eyes. The overseer saw it; and the fact that they were afraid of him made him still fiercer. He persecuted the people, both by blows and hard work; and the muzhiks suffered terribly at his hands.

Sometimes such evil-doers were put out of the way, and the muzhiks began to plan this way of escape. They would meet in some retired spot, and the boldest among them would say:—

"Must we go on suffering forever from our persecutor?—We are lost anyhow—to kill such a man is no sin."

The muzhiks were at one time gathered in the forest; it was before Holy Week. The overseer had sent them out to clear up the proprietor's forest. They gathered at dinner, and began to talk.

"How can we live now?" they said. "He will destroy us root and branch. He tortures us with work; neither we nor the women have any rest day or night any more. The least thing not to his mind, and he finds fault, he lashes us. Semyon died under his whip. Anisim was tortured in the stocks. What else can we expect? He will come here this evening; he will be making trouble again; let's just pull him off from his horse, give him a blow with the ax, and that'll be the end of it. We'll bury him somewhere like a dog, and no one will be any wiser.[1] Only one condition: we must all stand together and not give it away."

Thus spoke Vasili Minayef. He was more than all

[1] *I konlsui f vodu*, literally, "the ends in the water."

the rest incensed against the prikashchik, for he had whipped him every week and robbed him of his wife, by taking her as his cook.

Thus talked the muzhiks; in the evening the overseer came; he was on horseback; as soon as he came, he began to find fault with their work. They had not cut the wood in the right way. He discovered a little linden in the pile.

He said, "I did not tell you to cut the lindens. Who cut it down? Confess, or I 'll flog you all!"

He began to inquire in whose pile the linden was. They told him it was Sidor's. The prikashchik beat Sidor's face till it bled. Then he lashed Vasili like a Tartar because his pile was small; then he started home.

In the evening the muzhiks met again, and Vasili was the spokesman.

"Ekh! What people you are! Not men, but sparrows. 'We 'll stand together, we 'll stand together!' but when it comes to the point, all rush under the pent-roof. Thus sparrows try to fight a hawk: 'Don't give it away, don't give it away, we 'll stand together!' But when he swooped down on us, all scattered in the grass! And so the hawk caught the one he wanted, carried it off. The sparrows hopped out: '*Cheeveek! cheeveek!*' There is one missing! 'Who is gone?' Vanka, eh! 'That's his road, let him go! He deserves it.' The same way with you. If you are n't going to give it away, then don't give it away. When he seized Sidor, you should have clubbed together, and put an end to him. But still it is, 'Don't peach, don't peach! we 'll stand together!' But when he swooped down, all flew into the bushes!"

Thus they spoke more and more often, and at last the muzhiks determined to do away with the prikashchik. On Good Friday the overseer announced to the muzhiks that they must be ready to plow for the barin at Easter, so as to sow the oats. This seemed to the muzhiks an insult; and on Good Friday they gathered at Vasili's, in the back yard, and began to talk again.

"Since he has forgotten God," say they, "and wants to do such things, we must really kill him. We are ruined anyway."

Piotr Mikhyeyef also came with them. Piotr Mikhyeyef was a peace-loving muzhik, and did not agree with the others. Mikhyeyef came, heard their talk, and said:—

"You are meditating a great sin, brethren. To destroy a soul is a great crime. To destroy another man's soul is easy, but how about your own? He does wrong; it is bad for him. Brethren, we must bear it."

Vasili was angry at these words.

"He keeps repeating the same thing over and over," says he: "'It's a sin to kill a man! You know it is a sin to kill such a man,' says he. It is a sin to kill a good man, but even God has commanded to kill such a dog. You must kill a mad dog, out of pity for men; and not to kill him would be a greater sin. Why does he ruin people? But though we should suffer for it, we ought to do it for others. People will thank us. And to get rid of such spittle! He is ruining everybody. You talk nonsense, Mikhyeyitch. Why, it would be less of a sin than for all to go to work on Easter Sunday. You yourself would not go."

And Mikhyeyitch replied:—

"Why not go?" he asked. "They will send us, and I am going to plow. Not for myself. But God knows whose sin it is, only we should not forget Him. I, brethren," says he, "don't speak my own thoughts. If we had been commanded to do evil for evil, there would have been a law from God to that effect; but just the opposite is commanded us. You will do evil, but it will come back on you. It is not even clever to kill a man. His blood will stick in your soul. Kill a man — you stain your own soul with blood. You think, 'I have killed a bad man.' You think, 'I have destroyed a pest.' On the contrary, look, you have been led into doing a much worse sin to yourself. Yield to evil, and evil will yield to you."

And so the muzhiks did not agree; they were divided

by their thoughts. Some had the same opinion as Vasilyef; others coincided with the views of Piotr, that they should not attempt the sin, but bear it.

The muzhiks were celebrating the first of the holidays, which was Sunday. At evening the *starosta*, or village elder, came with attendants from the master's country-seat,[1] and said: —

"Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, the overseer, has given orders that all the muzhiks prepare on the morrow to plow in the oat-field."

The village elder went round with his attendants through the village, gave the orders for all to go out and plow the next day, calling to this one from over the river, this one from the highroad. The muzhiks wept, but dared not disobey. In the morning they went out with their wooden plows[2] and began to work.

At church the early morning mass was going on, the people everywhere else were celebrating the festival; but those muzhiks were plowing!

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, the overseer, woke up not very early, and went out on his place; his people — his wife and his widowed daughter, who had come for the festival — were dressed, and had on their finery; a laborer harnessed for them the little cart; they went off to mass and came home again; the serving-woman put on the samovar; Mikhaïl Semyonovitch came in, and they began their tea-drinking.

After Mikhaïl Semyonovitch had drunk enough tea, he lighted his pipe and called the village elder.

"Well, then, did you set the muzhiks to plowing?"

"I did, Mikhaïl Semyonovitch."

"What! did they all go?"

"All went; I myself set them at it."

"Setting them at work is all very well, but are they plowing? Go out and look, and tell them that I am coming after dinner to see if they have been plowing a desyatin to every two plows, and plowing it well, be-

[1] *Barsky dvor.* [2] *Sokhi.*

sides. If I find any mistake, I shan't hear to any festival."

"I will do so."

The village elder had started, but Mikhaïl Semyonovitch called him back; he hesitated, tried to say something, but could not.

He hesitated and hesitated, and at last he said: —

"Now, here, I want you to listen to what those villains are saying about me. Who is grumbling, and what they say, — tell me all about it. I know those villains; they don't like to work; all they care for is to be at their ease or go wandering about. They like to gormandize and have holidays, but they don't realize that if you put off the plowing it gets to be too late. So now, you just listen to what they say, and report it all to me. I must know about it. Go along and notice, and tell me all, and don't hide anything."

The village elder turned round, went off, mounted his horse, and rode off to the muzhiks in the field.

The overseer's wife had heard her husband's talk with the village elder, and came to her husband, and began to question him. She was a peace-loving woman, and kind-hearted. Where it was possible, she restrained her husband, and took the part of the muzhiks.

She came to her husband, and began to question him: —

"Mishenka,[1] my love," says she, "on the great day, the festival of the Lord, don't commit a sin; for Christ's sake, let the muzhiks off!"

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch did not heed his wife's words; he only began to laugh at her.

"It's a long time, isn't it," said he, "since you had a little taste of the whip, that you dare mix yourself up with other people's affairs?"

"Mishenka, my love, I had a bad dream about you; heed me; let the muzhiks off!"

"All right," said he; "I tell you, you've been living too high of late and think the whip won't reach you. Look out!"

[1] Diminutive of Mikhaïl.

Semyonovitch got angry, thrust his lighted pipe into his wife's teeth, drove her away, and ordered his dinner brought.

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch ate some cold meat, a pirog, cabbage-soup with pork, roast shoat, vermicelli cooked in milk; he drank some cherry wine and tasted a sweet tart; then he called up the cook and set her to performing some songs, while he himself took his guitar and began to play the accompaniments.

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was sitting in a gay frame of mind, belching, thrumming on the strings, and jesting with the cook.

The village elder came in, bowed low, and began to report what he had seen in the field.

"How is it? are they plowing? Will they finish their stint?"

"They have already done more than half of the plowing."

"None left undone?"

"I did not see any; they plow very well; they are afraid."

"Well, does the ground break up well?"

"The ground breaks up easily, it is as soft as poppy seed."

The overseer was silent.

"Well, and what are they saying about me? do they revile me?"

The starosta began to stammer, but Mikhaïl Semyonovitch bade him tell the whole truth.

"Tell me everything; you won't be speaking your own words, but those of others. If you tell the truth, I will reward you; but if you deceive me, look out! I will pickle you! Hé, Katyusha,[1] give him a glass of vodka to keep his courage up."

The cook came and brought the starosta the brandy. He thanked her, drank it up, wiped his lips, and began to speak: —

"All the same," he said to himself, "'t is n't my fault

[1] Katyusha, diminutive of Katya, which is the diminutive of Katerina or Yekaterina, Catherine.

that they don't praise him. I will tell the truth, since he tells me to."

And the starosta plucked up courage, and began to speak: —

"They grumble, Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, they grumble."

"Yes; but what do they say? Tell me."

"They say one thing: 'He does not believe in God.'"

The overseer laughed: —

"Who says that?"

"They all say it. They say, 'He has sold himself to the devil.'"

The overseer laughed.

"That," says he, "is excellent; now tell me individually who says that. Does Vaska say so?"

The starosta did not want to tell on his own people, but there had been a quarrel between him and Vasili for a long time.

"Vasili," says he, "scolds worse than any one else."

"Yes; what does he say? Speak it out."

"But it is terrible even to tell it. He says, 'You won't escape a violent death.'"[1]

"Ay! the smart fellow! Why does he wait — why does n't he kill me? He can't because his arms are n't long enough to reach me! Just wait!" said he. "Vaska! we 'll be quits with you! Now, how about Tishka? That dog also, I suppose?"

"Yes; they all speak bad."

"Yes; but what do they say?"

"Well, they say something abominable."

"What was abominable? Don't be afraid to tell."

"Well, they say that your belly will break open, and your bowels gush out."

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was delighted; he burst into a laugh.

"We will see whose does first! Who says that? Tishka?"

"No one said anything good; all growl, all are full of threats."

[1] *Bezpokayannaya smert;* literally, "an unrepentant death."

"Well, but how about Petrushka Mikheyef? What does he say? The gobbler! he reviles me, too, I suppose?"

"No, Mikhaïlo Semyonovitch. Piotr does not revile you."

"What does he do?"

"He is the only one of all the muzhiks that says nothing. He is a clever muzhik. I wondered at him, Mikhaïl Semyonuitch."

"But why?"

"At what he did; and all the muzhiks wondered at him."

"But what did he do?"

"Yes, it was very queer. I tried to get near him. He is plowing the sloping field on Turkin height. As I came near him, I heard him singing; he was carrying something gingerly, carefully; and on his plow, between the handles, something was shining."

"Well?"

"It was exactly like a little fire, shining. I went nearer and looked; it was a little wax candle — cost five kopeks — was stuck on to the cross-bar, and was lighted; and the wind did n't blow it out. And he, in his clean shirt, went up and down, plowing, and singing Sunday songs. And he turned back, and shook, and still the candle did n't go out. He shook it as I stood there, shifted the plowshare, lifted the plow, and all the time the candle was burning, and it did not go out."

"And what did he say?"

"Well, he did n't say anything; he only looked at me, gave me the Easter salutation,[1] and began to sing again."

"But what did you say to him?"

"I did not speak; but the muzhiks came up, and began to make sport of him; here they say, 'Mikhyeyitch, you will say enough prayers to atone for the sin of plowing on Easter Sunday.'"

[1] *Pokhristosovalsa;* a kiss with the exclamation *Khristos voskres*, Christ has arisen.

"What did he say to that?"

"He only said, '*On earth, peace, good-will to men.*' Then he took hold of the plow again, started up the horse, and sang in a low voice; but the candle burned, and did n't go out."

The overseer ceased to laugh, laid down the guitar, hung his head, and fell into thought.

He sat there, and sat there; then he sent out the cook and the starosta, and went behind the partition; lay down on the bed, and began to sigh, and groan, like a cart-load of sheaves going by. His wife came to him, began to talk with him; he gave her no reply. Only he said: —

"He has conquered me. Now it 's my turn."

His wife said to him: —

"Yes, go and let them off. Perhaps no harm is done. No matter what you have done, you have never feared before; what is there to be afraid of now?"

"I am lost," he said; "he has conquered me;" and he kept repeating, "He has conquered, conquered!"

His wife cried: —

"You keep repeating: 'He has conquered me, he has conquered me.' Go on! let the muzhiks off, then it will be all right. Go on, I will have the horse saddled."

They brought the horse; and the overseer's wife persuaded her husband to go out to the field and let the muzhiks go.

Mikhaïl Semyonuitch mounted his horse, and rode out to the field. He came to the inclosure; a peasant woman opened the gate for him; he rode into the village. As soon as the people saw him, they all hid themselves from him, one in a yard, another behind a corner, another in an orchard.

The overseer rode through the whole village; he came to the gates at the farther end. The gates were shut, and he could not open them on horseback. He shouted and shouted for some one to open them for him, but no one came. Getting down from his horse, he opened the gates himself, and tried to mount again from the gate-post. He lifted his foot to the stirrup,

lifted himself, and was just going to swing himself into the saddle, when the horse took fright at a pig, sprang against the paling; and the man was heavy; he did not reach the saddle, but was thrown on his belly against the paling. There was one sharp pole that stood out above the paling, and this was higher than the others. And he fell on his belly straight on this pole. And it ripped open his belly, and he fell on the ground.

The muzhiks were coming from the plowing; the horses snorted and refused to pass through the turn into the gates; the muzhiks looked to see what the matter was, and there Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was lying on his back, his arms stretched out, and his eyes fixed, and his insides had gushed out over the ground, and his blood made a pool — the earth would not drink it.

The muzhiks were frightened; they drove the horses in by another way; only Piotr Mikhyeyitch dismounted and went to the overseer, and, seeing that he was dead, closed his eyes, harnessed the telyega, helped the dead man's son to put him in a box, and carried him back to the manor-house.

The barin learned about all these things, and on account of the sin forgave the muzhiks their tax.

And the muzhiks learned that God's power works not by sin, but by goodness.

THE TWO OLD MEN

CHAPTER I

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.
Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.
Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." — JOHN iv. 19–23.

TWO aged men resolved to worship God in old Jerusalem. One was a rich muzhik; his name was Yefim Tarasuitch Shevelef: the other — Yeliseï Bodrof — was not a rich man.

Yefim was a sedate muzhik; he did not drink vodka, or smoke tobacco, or take snuff. All his life long he had never used a bad word, and he was a strict and upright man. He had served two terms as village elder[1] and had come out without a deficit.

He had a large family, — two sons and a married grandson, — and all lived together. As for himself, he was hale, long-bearded, erect, and, though he was in his seventh decade, his beard was only beginning to grow gray.

Yeliseï was a little old man, neither rich nor poor; in former times he had gone about doing jobs in carpentry; but now, as he grew old, he began to stay at home, and took to raising bees. One of his sons had

[1] The *starosta*, or *starshina*, is president of the village council, and is held accountable for the taxes levied on the *mir*, or commune.

gone away to work, the other was at home. Yeliseï was a good-natured and jolly man. He used to drink vodka, and take snuff, and he liked to sing songs; but he was a peaceable man, and lived amicably with his family and his neighbors. As to his person, Yeliseï was a short, darkish little muzhik, with a curly beard; and like his name-saint, Elisha the prophet, he was entirely bald.

The old men had long ago promised and agreed to go together, but Tarasuitch had never found the leisure; his engagements had never come to an end. As soon as one was through with, another began: first the grandson got married; then they expected the younger son from the army; and then, again, he was occupied in building a new izba.

One festival day the old men met, and sat down together on the timber.

"Well," says Yeliseï, "when shall we set out, and fulfil our promise?"

Yefim knit his brow.

"We must wait awhile," says he. "This year it'll come hard for me. I am engaged in building this izba. I counted on spending about a hundred rubles; but I'm already on the third, and it isn't finished yet. You see, that'll take till summer. In the summer, if God grants, we will go without let or hindrance."

"According to my idea," says Yeliseï, "we ought not to put it off; we ought to go to-day. It's the very time — spring."

"It is a good time certainly; but this work is begun: how can I leave it?

"Haven't you any one? Your son will attend to it."

"How attend to it? My eldest son is not to be trusted — he is given to drinking."

"We shall die, old friend; they'll have to live without us. Your son must learn."

"That's so; but I should like to see this job finished under my own eyes!"

"Ah! my dear man, you will never get all you want done. Only the other day, at my house, the women-

folks were cleaning house, fixing up for Easter. And both are necessary, but you 'd never get done. And my oldest daughter-in-law, a sensible woman, says, 'Thank the Lord,' says she, 'Easter is coming; it does n't wait for us, else,' says she, 'however much we did we should never get it all done.'"

Tarasuitch was lost in thought.

"I have put a good deal of money," says he, "into this building; and we can't go on this journey with empty hands. It won't take less than a hundred rubles."

Yeliseï laughed out: —

"Don't make a mistake, old friend," says he; "you have ten times as much property as I have. And you talk about money! Only say when shall we go? I have n't anything, but I 'll manage it."

Tarasuitch also smiled.

"How rich you seem!" says he; "but where will you get it?"

"Well, I shall scrape some up at home — that 'll be something; and for the rest, — I 'll let my neighbor have ten of my hives. He has been after them for a long time."

"This is going to be a good swarming-year; you 'll regret it."

"Regret it? No, old friend. I never regretted anything in my life except my sins. There is nothing more precious than the soul!"

"That's so. But it's not pleasant when things are n't right at home."

"But how will it be with us if our souls are not right? Then it will be worse. But we have made a vow — let us go! I beg of you, let us go!"

CHAPTER II

And Yeliseï persuaded his friend. Yefim thought about it, and thought about it; and in the morning he came to Yeliseï.

"Well, then, let us go," says he. "You are right. In death and in life, God rules. Since we are alive, and have strength, we must go."

At the end of a week the old men had made their preparations.

Tarasuitch had money in the house. He took one hundred rubles for his journey; two hundred he left for the old woman.

Yeliseï also was ready. He sold his neighbor the ten beehives. And the bees that would swarm from the ten hives, also, he sold to the neighbor. He received, all told, seventy rubles. The other thirty rubles he swept up as best he could. The old woman gave him all that she had saved up against her funeral; the daughter-in-law gave what she had.

Yefim Tarasuitch intrusted all his affairs to his oldest son, — he told him what meadows to rent, and where to put manure, and how to finish and roof in the izba. He thought about everything, he ordered how everything should be done.

But Yeliseï only directed his old woman to hive the young swarms of bees that he had sold, and give them to his neighbor without any trickery; but about household affairs, he did not have anything to say: —

"If anything comes up, light will be given what to do and how to do it. You people at home do as you think best."

The old men were now ready. The wives baked a lot of flat-cakes,[1] sewed some bags, cut new leg-wrappers;[2] they put on new boots, took some extra bast-shoes,[3] and set forth. The folks kept them company to the common pasture, bade them good-by, and the old men set out on their journey.

Yeliseï set out in good spirits, and, as soon as he left the village, he forgot all about his cares. His only thoughts were how to please his companion on the way, how not to say a single churlish word to any one, and

[1] *Lepyoshki.*
[2] *Onutchi*, strips of cloth used by the muzhiks instead of stockings.
[3] *Lapti.*

how to go in peace and love to the Places and return home. As he walked along the road, all the time he either whispered a prayer, or called to memory some saint's life which he knew. And if he met any one on the road, or came to any halting-place, he made himself as useful and as agreeable as possible to every one, and even said a word in God's service. He went on his way rejoicing. One thing Yeliseï could not do. He intended to give up snuff-taking, and he left his snuff-box; but it was melancholy. A man on the road gave him some. And now and again he would drop behind his companion, so as not to lead him into temptation, and take a pinch of snuff.

Yefim Tarasuitch also got along well — sturdily; he fell into no sin and he said nothing churlish, but he was not easy in his mind. He could not get his household affairs out of his mind. He kept thinking of what was doing at home. Had he forgotten to give his son some commands? and was his son doing as he was told? If he saw any one by the road planting potatoes, or spreading manure, he would think, "Is my son doing what I told him?" He was almost ready to turn back and show him how, and even do it himself.

CHAPTER III

Five weeks the old men had been journeying; their home-made lapti were worn out, and they had been obliged to buy new ones; and they came to the land of the Top-Knots.[1]

From the time that they left home, they had paid for lodging and meals; but now that they had come among the Top-Knots, the people began to vie with each other in giving them invitations. They gave them shelter, and they fed them, and they would not take money from them, but even put bread, and sometimes flat-cakes, into their bags for the journey. Thus bravely the old

[1] *Khokhlachina*, Little Russia; a popular nickname for a Malo-Russian is *Khokhol*, tuft or top-knot. — Ed.

men journeyed seven hundred versts. They passed through still another government, and came to a famine-stricken place.

They received them kindly and took them in, and would not take pay for lodgings; but they could no longer feed them. And they did not always let them have bread; and, again, it was not always to be obtained at all for love or money. The year before, so the people said, nothing had grown. Those who were rich had been ruined, and forced to sell out; those who lived in medium circumstances had come down to nothing; but the poor had either gone away altogether, or had come upon the Mir, or had almost perished in their homes. All winter they had been living on husks and pigweed.

One time the old men put up at a little place; they bought fifteen pounds of bread; and, having spent the night, they started off betimes, so as to get as far as possible before the heat of the day. They went ten versts, and reached a little river; they sat down, filled their cups with water, moistened the little loaves, ate their luncheon, and changed their shoes. They sat some time resting. Yeliseï got out his little snuff-horn. Yefim Tarasuitch shook his head at him.

"Why," said he, "don't you throw away that nasty stuff?"

Yeliseï wrung his hands.

"The sin is too strong for me," said he; "what can I do?"

They got up, and went on their way. They went half a score of versts farther. They came to a great village; they went right through it. And already it had grown hot. Yeliseï was dead with fatigue; he wanted to rest, and have a drink, but Tarasuitch would not halt. Tarasuitch was the stronger in walking, and it was rather hard for Yeliseï to keep up with him.

"I 'd like a drink," says he.

"All right. Get a drink. I don't want any."

Yeliseï stopped.

"Don't wait," says he; "I 'm only going to run in for

a minute here at this hut, and get a drink. I 'll overtake you in a jiffy."

"All right."

And Yefim Tarasuitch proceeded on his way alone, and Yeliseï turned back to the hut.

Yeliseï went up to the hut. The hut was small, and plastered with mud; below it was black; above, white. The clay was peeling off; long, apparently, since it had been mended; and the roof in one place was broken through. The way to the hut led through a dvor or courtyard. Yeliseï went into the dvor and saw lying on the earth embankment a thin, beardless man, in shirt and drawers — in Little Russian fashion. The man evidently had laid himself down when it was cool, but now the sun was beating straight down upon him. And he lay there, and was not asleep. Yeliseï spoke to him and asked him for a drink. The man made no reply.

"Either he 's sick or he 's ugly," thought Yeliseï, and he went to the door. He heard a child crying in the hut. Yeliseï rapped with the ring: —

"Masters." [1]

No reply. He rapped again on the door with his staff: —

"Christians!" [2]

No one moved.

"Servants of God!"

No one answered. Yeliseï was about to proceed on his way, but he listened; some one seemed to be groaning behind the door.

"Can some misfortune have befallen these people? I must look and see."

And Yeliseï went into the hut.

CHAPTER IV

Yeliseï turned the ring — it was not fastened. He opened the door, and passed through the little vestibule. The door into the hut stood open; at the left was an oven; straight ahead was the front-room or "corner";

[1] *Khozyaeva.* [2] *Kreshchenuie;* literally, "Ye baptized!"

in the "corner" a shrine and a table; by the table a bench; on the bench, an old woman, in a single shirt, with disheveled hair, was sitting, resting her head on the table. At her elbow an emaciated little boy, pale as wax, with a distended belly, was tugging at the old woman's sleeve, and roaring at the top of his voice, asking for something.

Yeliseï went into the hut. In the hut the air was stifling; he looked around behind the oven: on the floor a woman was lying. She was lying on her back, and did not look up; only moaned, and sometimes stretched out her leg, sometimes drew it up again. And she threw herself from side to side, and the stench arising from her showed that she had soiled herself and no one had attended to her.

The old woman raised her head, and looked at the man.

"What do you want?" says she. "What do you want? We 've nothing for you." [1]

Yeliseï understood what she said; he went up to her. "I am a servant of God," says he; "I come to get a drink."

"Hain't got any, hain't got any. Hain't got anything to get it in. Go away!"

Yeliseï began to question her.

"Tell me, isn't there any one of you well enough to take care of the woman?"

"Hain't got any one — the man outside is dying, and here we are."

The boy had ceased crying when he saw the stranger; but when the old woman spoke, he began to tug again at her sleeve: "Bread, granny, bread!" and began screaming again.

Yeliseï was going to ask more questions of the old woman, when the muzhik came stumbling into the hut; he went along by the wall, and was going to sit on the bench, but failed of it, and fell into the room at the

[1] She speaks in the staccato Malo-Russian dialect: *Chovo tobi treba? .... Nye ma, Cholovitche, nitchovo! Tobi* for *tibye; ma* for *mui; cholovitche* for *chelovyek* (man).

threshold. And he did not try to get up: he tried to speak. He would speak one word — then break off, his breath failed him — then he would speak another: —

"Sick," .... said he, "and .... starving. .... Here .... he .... is .... dying .... starvation."

The muzhik indicated the boy with his head, and burst into tears.

Yeliseï shook off his sack from his shoulders, freed his arms, set the sack on the floor, then lifted it to the bench, and began to undo it. He undid it, took out bread, and a knife; then he cut off a slice, and offered it to the muzhik. The muzhik would not take it, but pointed to the boy and to the girl.

"Give it to them, please."

Yeliseï held it out to the boy. The boy smelt the bread, stretched himself up, seized the slice with both his little hands, and buried his nose in the slice. A little girl crept out from behind the oven, and stared at the bread. Yeliseï gave her some also. He cut off still another piece and gave it to the old woman. The old woman took it, and began to chew it.

"Would you bring some water?" she said; "their mouths are parched. I tried," says she, "yesterday, or to-day, — I don't remember which, — to get some. I fell, and could n't get there; and the bucket is there yet, unless some one has stolen it."

Yeliseï asked where their well was. The old woman gave him the directions. Yeliseï went and found the bucket, brought water, gave the people some to drink.

The children were still eating the bread and drinking the water, and the old woman ate some too; but the muzhik refused to eat.

"It makes me sick at my stomach."

His wife, who did not notice anything at all, or come to herself, only tossed about on the boards.

Yeliseï went to the village, bought at the shop some millet, salt, flour, butter, and looked round for a hatchet. He split up some wood, — began to kindle a fire in the oven. The little girl began to help him. Yeliseï boiled some porridge and kasha, and fed the people.

CHAPTER V

The muzhik ate a little, and the old woman ate a little; but the little girl and the little boy licked the bowl clean, and lay down to sleep locked in each other's arms.

The muzhik and the old woman began to relate how all this had come upon them.

"We were n't rich, even before this," said they; "but when nothing grew, we had to give all we had for food last autumn. We parted with everything; then we had to go begging among our neighbors and kind people. At first they gave to us, but then they sent us away. Some would have gladly given to us, but they had nothing. Yes, and we were ashamed to beg; we got in debt to every one, both for money and flour and bread. I tried to get work," said the muzhik, "but there was no work. People everywhere were wandering about to work for something to eat. You 'd work one day, and you 'd go about for two hunting for work. The old woman and the little girl had to go a long way off begging. Not much was given them; no one had any bread to spare. And so we lived, hoping we should get along somehow till new crops came. But since spring they stopped giving at all, and then sickness came on. Things were just as bad as they could be. One day we had something to eat, but the next two nothing. We began to eat herbs. Yes, perhaps it was from eating herbs, or something of the sort, that my wife got sick. My wife became sick, and I have no strength," said the muzhik. "There was no way of curing us."

"I was the only one," said the old woman, "who kept up; but without eating, I lost my strength, and got puny. And the little girl got puny, and lost heart. We sent her to the neighbors, but she would n't go. She crept into the corner, and would n't come out. Day before yesterday a neighbor came round, yes, and she saw that we were starving, and were sick; but she turned round and went off. But her own husband had left her,

and she had n't anything to feed her little children with. .... And so here we lay, — waiting for death."

Yeliseï listened to their talk, and changed his mind about going to rejoin his companion that day, and he spent the night there.

In the morning Yeliseï got up, did the chores as if he were master of the house. He and the old woman kneaded the bread, and he lighted the fire in the oven. He went with the little girl to the neighbors', to get what they needed; for there was nothing to be found — nothing at all: everything had been disposed of; there was nothing for domestic purposes, and no clothing. And Yeliseï began to lay in a supply of what was needed. Some he himself made, and some he bought. Thus Yeliseï spent one day, spent a second, spent also a third.

The little boy got better, began to climb up on the bench, to caress Yeliseï. But the little girl became perfectly gay, and helped in everything. And she kept trotting after Yeliseï: "Grand-dad, dear little grand-daddy!" [1]

And the old woman also got up, and went to her neighbor's house. And the muzhik began to walk, supporting himself by the wall. Only the peasant's wife lay unconscious; but even she, on the third day, came to herself, and began to ask for something to eat.

"Well," thinks Yeliseï, "I did n't expect to spend so much time; now I 'll be going."

CHAPTER VI

On the fourth day, meat-eating was allowed for the first time after the fast; and Yeliseï said to himself: —

"Come, now, I will feast with these people. I will buy them something for the Saints' day,[2] and toward evening I will go."

Yeliseï went to the village again, bought milk, white

[1] *Didu, didusyu,* Malo-Russian for *dyedya, dyedushka.*
[2] St. Peter and St. Paul; July 11 (June 29, O.S.).

flour, lard. He and the old woman boiled and baked; and in the morning Yeliseï went to mass, and when he came back, he ate meat with the people. On this day the wife also got up, and began to creep about. And the muzhik had shaved, put on a clean shirt, — the old woman had washed it out, — and gone to the village to ask mercy of a rich muzhik. Both meadow and corn-land had been mortgaged to the rich muzhik. So he went to ask if he would not give him back the meadow and corn-land till the new crops.

The husband returned toward evening, gloomy and in tears. The rich muzhik would not have pity on him. He said: —

"Bring your money."

Again Yeliseï falls into thought.

"How will he live now?" thinks he. "The men will be going out to mow; he has nothing. His hay-field is mortgaged. The rye is ripening; the men are beginning to harvest it (our good mother earth[1] has done well for us this year), but these people won't have anything: their field has been mortgaged to the rich muzhik. If I go away, they 'll be in trouble again."

And Yeliseï was much troubled by these thoughts, and did not take his departure that evening; he waited till morning. He went outdoors to sleep. He said his prayers and lay down, but he could not sleep.

"I must go — here I have been spending so much money and time — and I 'm sorry for these people. You can't give to everybody, evidently. I meant to get them some water, and give them a slice of bread; but just see how it has taken me! Now — I must redeem their meadow and their field. And when I 've redeemed their field, I must buy a cow for the children, and a horse to carry the muzhik's sheaves. There you are in a pretty pickle, brother Yeliseï Kuzmitch! You 're anchored here, and you don't get off so easy!"

Yeliseï got up, took his kaftan from under his head, unfolded it, found his snuff-horn, took a pinch of snuff, tried to clear up his thoughts; but no, he thought and

[1] *Khorosha matushka.*

he thought, but could not think it out. He must go; but he pitied these people. And what to do, he knew not. He folded up his kaftan for a pillow, and lay down again. He lay and he lay, and the cocks were already singing when he finally fell into a doze.

Suddenly, something seemed to wake him up. He saw himself, as it were, all dressed, with his sack and his staff; and he had to go through a gate, but the gate was so nearly shut that only one person could get through at a time. And he went to the gate, and got caught on one side by his sack; he tried to detach it, and got caught on the other side by his leg-wrapper; and the leg-wrapper untied. He tried to detach it, but after all it was not the wattle which detained him, but the little girl holding him, and crying, "Grand-dad, dear little grand-daddy, bread!"[1] He looked down at his leg, and the little boy was clinging to his leg-wrapper; the old woman and the muzhik were gazing from the window.

Yeliseï woke up, and said to himself aloud, "To-morrow," said he, "I will redeem the field and the meadow; and I will buy a horse, and flour enough to last till the new comes; and I will buy a cow for the children. For otherwise I should go across the sea to find Christ, and lose Him in my own soul. I must set these people right."

And Yeliseï slept till morning.

Yeliseï woke up early. He went to the rich muzhik; he redeemed the rye-field; he paid cash for it, and for the meadow-land. He bought a scythe, — the very one that had been disposed of, and brought it back. He sent the muzhik to mow, and he himself went round among the muzhiks; at last found a horse and telyega which an innkeeper was ready to sell. He struck a bargain and bought them. He bought, also, some flour, put the sack in the telyega, and went farther to buy a cow. Yeliseï was going along; he overtook two Top-Knots. They were women; and they were gossiping as they walked. And Yeliseï heard the women talking

[1] *Didu, didusyu, khliba. Khliba,* Malo-Russian for *khlyeba.*

in their own speech, and he made out that they were talking about him.

"Heavens! at first they did n't know what to make of him; their idea was, he was a mere man. As he came by, it seems, he stopped to get a drink, and then he stayed. Whatever they needed, he bought. I myself saw him this very day buy of the tavern-keeper a nag and cart.[1] Did n't know there were such folks in the world. Must go and see him!"

Yeliseï heard this, understood that they were praising him, and did not go to buy the cow. He returned to the tavern, and paid the money for the horse. He harnessed up, and drove with the wheat back to the hut. He drove up to the gate, reined in, and dismounted from the telyega. The household saw the horse; they wondered. And it occurred to them that he had bought the horse for them, but they dared not say so. The husband came out to open the gate.

"Where," says he, "did you get the nag, grandpa?"

"I bought it," says he. "I got it cheap. Mow a little grass, please, for the stall, for her to lie on over night. Yes, and fetch in the bag."

The husband unharnessed the horse, fetched the bag into the house; then he mowed a lot of grass and spread it in the stall. They went to bed. Yeliseï lay down out-of-doors, and there he had brought out his sack the evening before. All the folks were asleep. Yeliseï got up, shouldered his sack, fastened his leg-wrappers, put on his kaftan, and started on his way after Yefim.

CHAPTER VII

Yeliseï had gone five versts and it began to grow light. He sat down under a tree, opened his sack, and began to reckon. He counted his money: there were left only seventeen rubles, twenty kopeks.

"Well," said he to himself, "with this I shan't get across the sea. And to beg in Christ's name — that

[1] *Vos*, Malo-Russian for *telyega*.

might be a great sin. Friend Yefim will go alone; he 'll set a candle for me. But the vow will remain on me till death. Thank the Lord, the Master is kind; He will have patience."

Yeliseï got up, lifted his sack up on his shoulders, and went back. Only, he went out of his way round the village, so that the people of it might not see him. And Yeliseï reached home quickly. When he started, it seemed hard to him, beyond his strength, to keep up with Yefim; but, going back, God gave him such strength that he walked along and did not know fatigue. He walked along gayly, swinging his staff, and made his seventy versts a day.

Yeliseï reached home. Already the fields had been harvested. The folks were delighted to see their old man; they began to ask him questions,— how, and what, and why he had left his companion, why he did not go on, but came home. Yeliseï did not care to tell them about it.

"God did not permit me," says he. "I spent my money on the road, and fell behind my companion. And so I did not get there. Forgive me for Christ's sake."

And he handed the old woman what money he had left. Yeliseï inquired about the domestic affairs: it was all right; everything had been done properly; there was nothing left undone in the farm-work, and all were living in peace and harmony.

On this very same day, Yefim's people heard that Yeliseï had returned; they came round to ask after their old man. And Yeliseï told them the same thing.

"Your old man," says he, "went on sturdily; we parted," says he, "three days before Peter's Day; I intended to catch up with him, but then so many things happened: I spent my money, and, as I could n't go on with what I had, I came back."

The people wondered how such a sensible man could have done so foolishly — start out, and not go on, and only waste his money. They wondered and forgot. And Yeliseï thought no more about it. He began to do

the chores again; he helped his son chop wood against the winter; he threshed the corn with the women; he rethatched the shed, arranged about the bees, and gave his neighbor the ten hives with their increase. His old woman wanted to hide how many swarms had come from the hives that he had sold; but Yeliseï himself knew what hives had swarmed and what had not; and he gave his neighbor, instead of ten, seventeen swarms. Yeliseï arranged everything, sent his son off to work, and he himself settled down for the winter to make bast-shoes and chisel out beehives.

CHAPTER VIII

All that day when Yeliseï was staying in the sick folks' hut, Yefim waited for his companion. He went on a little way, and sat down. He waited and waited, and finally went to sleep; he woke up, and still sat there; no companion! He gazed with all his eyes. Already the sun had gone behind the trees — no Yeliseï.

"He can't have gone past me, or ridden by, — perhaps some one gave him a lift, — and not seen me while I was asleep, can he? He could not have helped seeing me. You see a long way on the steppes. If I should go back," he said to himself, "he would be getting ahead. We might miss each other; that would be still worse. I will go on; we shall meet at our lodging."

He went on to a village, asked the village policeman to send such and such an old man, if he came along, to yonder hut.

Yeliseï did not come to the lodging.

Yefim went farther; asked everybody if they had seen a bald, little old man. No one had seen him. Yefim wondered, and went on alone.

"We shall meet," he said to himself, "in Odessa somewhere, or on board ship."

And he ceased to think about it.

On the way he met a strannik.[1] The strannik wore a

[1] A professional pilgrim, of the genus tramp.

skullcap and cassock, and had long hair; had been to the Athos Monastery, and was going to Jerusalem for the second time. They met at the lodgings, got into conversation, and went on together.

They reached Odessa safely. They waited thrice twenty-four hours for a ship. Many pilgrims were waiting there. They were from different lands. Again Yefim made inquiries about Yeliseï; no one had seen him.

Yefim asked for a passport; it cost five rubles. He paid forty silver rubles for a return ticket; bought bread and herring for the voyage. The vessel was loaded, the pilgrims embarked; Tarasuitch also took his place with the strannik. They hoisted anchor, set sail, flew across the sea. They sailed well all day; at evening a wind sprang up, rain fell; it began to get rough, and the waves dashed over the ship. The people were thrown about, women began to scream, and the weaker among the men began to run about the vessel, trying to find a place.

Fear fell upon Yefim also, but he did not show it. Exactly where he had sat down on coming on board, near some old men from Tambof, here also he kept sitting all night and all the next day; they only clung to their sacks, and said nothing. It cleared off on the third day. On the fifth day they reached Tsargrad.[1] Some of the stranniks were put ashore; they wanted to look at the temple of Sophia-Wisdom, where now the Turks hold sway. Tarasuitch did not land, but still sat on board. Only he bought some white loaves. They stayed twenty-four hours; again they flew over the sea. They made another stop at the city of Smyrna; at another city, Alexandria; and they happily reached the city of Jaffa. At Jaffa all the pilgrims disembarked. It was seventy versts on foot to Jerusalem. Also at landing, the people were panic-stricken; the ship was high, and the people had to jump down into boats; and the boat rocked, and there was danger that one might not strike it, but might fall in alongside; and two men were drenched, but all were landed happily.

[1] Constantinople, the *Tsar-city*.

They landed and started off on foot. On the third day after landing they reached Jerusalem. They established themselves in the city at the Russian hostelry;[1] their passports were inscribed; they ate their dinner; then Yefim and the strannik went to the Holy Places. But to the Lord's sepulcher itself there was no longer any admittance.

They went to the Patriarchal Monastery; there all the worshipers collected; the women all sat down in one place, the men also sat down in another place. They were bidden to take off their shoes, and to sit in a circle. A monk came in with a towel, and began to wash all their feet: he washed them, wiped them, and kissed them; and thus he did to all. He washed Yefim's feet, and kissed them.

They attended vespers and matins: they said their prayers, they placed candles, and presented prayers for their parents. And here also they were given something to eat, and wine was brought.

In the morning they went to the cell of Mary of Egypt, where she made her refuge. They set up candles, sang a Te Deum. Thence they went to the Monastery of Abraham. They saw the garden on Mount Moriah — the place where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son to God. Then they went to the place where Christ revealed himself to Mary Magdalene, and to the Church of James the brother of the Lord.

The strannik pointed out all these places, and always told where it was necessary to contribute money. They returned for dinner to the hostelry; and after dinner,

[1] The five or six thousand Russian pilgrims who every year visit Jerusalem, says a recent traveler, "are all accommodated in the extensive premises belonging to the Russian Government, in the center of which the Russian Consulate is situated, and which forms a sort of Russian suburb to the Holy City." Mr. Oliphant quotes a correspondent of the *Daily News* to the effect that the "Orthodox Palestine Society, one of whose tasks it is to facilitate Russian pilgrimage to the Holy Land," has a membership of more than six hundred members, a reserve capital of sixty thousand rubles, and a Grand Duke — the uncle of the Tsar — as its president It is a curious question how long religious fanatics will be able to impose the "pious frauds" of the religious places upon credulous pilgrims, such as Yefim Tarasuitch. — ED.

just as they were getting ready to go to bed, the strannik began to groan, to shake his clothes, and to search. "I have been robbed," he says, "of my *portmonet*, with my money. Twenty-three rubles," said he, "there was in it — two ten-ruble notes, and three in change." The strannik mourned, mourned; nothing to be done: they lay down to sleep.

CHAPTER IX

Yefim lay down to sleep, and temptation fell upon him.

"The strannik's money was not stolen," he said to himself; "he did n't have any. He never gave any. He told me where to give, but he himself did not give; yes, and he borrowed a ruble of me."

Thus Yefim argued, and then began to scold himself.

"Why," said he, "do I judge the man? I do wrong. I won't think about it."

As he grew sleepy, again he began to think how sharp the strannik was about money, and what an unlikely story he told about his *portmonet* having been stolen. "He had n't any money," he said to himself. "It was a trick."

Next morning they got up, and went to early mass in the great Church of the Resurrection; to the tomb of the Lord. The strannik did not leave Yefim; he went with him everywhere.

They went to the church. A great crowd of people were collected together, of pilgrim-stranniks, Russians, and all peoples — of Greeks and Armenians, and Turks and Syrians. Yefim entered the sacred gates with the people. A monk led them. He led them past Turkish guards to the place where the Saviour was taken from the cross and anointed, and where the nine great candlesticks were burning. He pointed out everything, and told them everything. Here Yefim placed a candle. Then some monks led Yefim to the right hand up the little flight of steps to Golgotha, where the cross stood.

Here Yefim said a prayer. Then they pointed out to Yefim the hole where the earth had opened down to hell; then they pointed out the place where they had fastened Christ's hands and feet to the cross; then they showed the tomb of Adam, over whose bones Christ's blood had flowed; then they came to the stone whereon Christ had sat when they put on him the crown of thorns; then to the pillar to which they bound Christ when they scourged him; then Yefim saw the stone with two hollows for Christ's feet. They were going to show them something more, but the crowd were in a hurry; they all rushed to the very grotto of the Lord's sepulcher. There the foreign mass had just ended, the orthodox mass was just beginning. Yefim went into the grotto with the throng.

He was anxious to get rid of the strannik, for continually in his thoughts he was sinning against the strannik: but the strannik would not be got rid of; in company with him he went to mass at the Lord's sepulcher. They tried to get nearer; they did not get there in time. The people were wedged so close that there was no going forward or back. Yefim stood, gazed forward, said his prayers; but it was of no use;[1] he kept feeling whether his purse was still there. He was divided in his thoughts: one moment he imagined the strannik was deceiving him; the next he thought: —

"Or, if he is not deceiving me, and he was really robbed, why, then, it might be the same with me also."

CHAPTER X

Thus Yefim stood, and said his prayers, and looked forward toward the chapel where the sepulcher itself is; and on the sepulcher the thirty-six lamps were burning. Yefim stood, looked over the heads, when, what a marvel! Under the lamps themselves, where the blessed fire was burning before all, he saw a little old man standing, in a coarse kaftan, with a bald spot over his whole head, just as in the case of Yeliseï Bodrof.

[1] *N'yet, n'yet.* Literally, "no, no."

"It 's like Yeliseï," he thinks. "But it can't be him. He can't have got here before I did. No vessel had sailed for a week before us. He could n't have got in ahead. And he was n't on our vessel. I saw all the pilgrims."

While Yefim was thus reasoning, the little old man began to pray; and he bowed three times — once straight ahead, toward God, and then toward the orthodox throng on both sides. And as the little old man bent down his head to the right, then Yefim recognized him. It was Bodrof himself, with his blackish, curly beard, growing gray on the cheeks; and his eyebrows, and eyes, and nose, and all his peculiarities. It was Yeliseï Bodrof himself.

Yefim was filled with joy because his companion had come, and he wondered how Yeliseï had got there ahead of him.

"Well, well, Bodrof," he said to himself, "how did he get up there in front? He must have fallen in with somebody who put him there. Let me just meet him as we go out; I 'll get rid of this strannik in his skullcap, and go with him, and perhaps he will get me a front place too."

And all the time Yefim kept his eyes on Yeliseï, so as not to miss him.

Now the mass was over; the crowd reeled, they tried to make their way, they struggled; Yefim was pushed to one side. Again the fear came on him that some one would steal his purse.

Yefim clutched his purse, and tried to break through the crowd, so as to get into an open space. He made his way into the open space; he walked and walked, he sought and sought for Yeliseï,[1] and in the church also. And there, also, in the church he saw many people in cloisters; and some were eating, and drinking wine, and sleeping, and reading. And there was no Yeliseï anywhere. Yefim returned to the hostelry, but he did not find his companion. And that evening the strannik also did not come back. He disappeared, and did not return the ruble. Yefim was left alone.

[1] *Khodil-khodil, iskal-iskal Yeliseya.*

On the next day Yefim again went to the Lord's sepulcher, with an old man from Tambof, who had come on the same ship with him. He wanted to get to the front, but again he was crowded back; and he stood by a pillar, and prayed. He looked to the front: again under the lamps, at the very sepulcher of the Lord, in the foremost place, stood Yeliseï, spreading his arms like the priest at the altar; and the light shone all over his bald head.

"Well," thinks Yefim, "now I 'll surely not miss him."

He tried to push through to the front. He pushed through. No Yeliseï! Apparently he had gone out.

And on the third day, again he gazed toward the Lord's sepulcher: in the same sacred spot stood Yeliseï, with the same aspect, his arms outspread, and looking up, almost as if his eyes were fixed upon him. And the bald spot on his whole head shone.

"Well," thinks Yefim, "now I 'll not miss him; I 'll go and stand at the door. There we shan't miss each other."

Yefim went and stood and stood. He stood there half the day; all the people went out — no Yeliseï.

Yefim spent six weeks in Jerusalem, and went everywhere; and in Bethlehem, and Bethany, and on the Jordan; and he had a seal stamped on a new shirt at the Lord's sepulcher, so that he might be buried in it; and he got some Jordan water in a vial, and some earth; and he bought some candles with the holy fire, and he had the prayer for the dead registered in the eight places; and having spent all his money, except enough to get him home, Yefim started on the home journey. He went to Jaffa, took passage in a ship, sailed to Odessa, and from there proceeded to walk home.

CHAPTER XI

Yefim walked alone over the same road as before. As he began to near his home, again the worriment came upon him as to how his folks were getting along without him.

"In a year," thinks he, "much water leaks away. You spend a whole lifetime making a house, and it does n't take long to go to waste."

How had his son conducted affairs in his absence? how had the spring opened up? how had the cattle weathered the winter? how had they finished the izba?

Yefim reached that place where, the year before, he had parted from Yeliseï. It was impossible to recognize the people. Where, the preceding year, there had been wretched poverty, now all were living in sufficient comfort. There had been good crops. The people had recovered and forgotten their former trouble.

One evening Yefim reached the very village where, the year before, Yeliseï had stopped. He had hardly entered the village, when a little girl in a white shirt sprang out from behind a hut: —

"Grandpa! Dear grandpa![1] Come into our house!"

Yefim was inclined to go on, but the little girl would not let him; she seized him by the skirts, pulled him along into the hut, and laughed.

There came out on the doorsteps a woman with a little boy; she also beckoned to him: "Come in, please, grandsire, *d'yedushko*, — and take supper with us, — you shall spend the night."

Yefim went in.

"All right," he said to himself; "I will ask about Yeliseï. I believe this is the very hut where he stopped to get a drink."

Yefim went in; the woman took his sack from him, gave him a chance to wash, and set him at the table. She put on milk, vareniki,[2] kasha-gruel, — she set them all on the table. Tarasuitch thanked and praised the people for being so hospitable to pilgrims. The woman shook her head: —

"We cannot help being hospitable to pilgrims. We owe our lives to a pilgrim. We lived, we had forgotten God, and God had forgotten us, so that all that we

[1] *Did! didko.* Malo-Russian for *D'yed, d'yedushka.*

[2] A sort of triangular doughnuts, or dumplings, stuffed with cheese or curds.

expected was death. Last summer it went so bad with us that we were all flat on our backs,— we had nothing to eat, — oh, how sick we were! And we should have died; but God sent us such a nice old man, just like you! He came in just at noon to get a drink; and when he saw us, he was sorry for us, yes, and he stayed on with us. And he gave us something to drink, and fed us, and put us on our legs; and he bought back our land, and he bought us a horse and cart and left them with us."

The old woman came into the hut; she took the woman's story out of her mouth.

"And we don't know at all," said she, "whether it was a man, or an angel of God. He loved us all so, and he was so sorry for us; and he went away without saying anything, and we don't know who we should pray God for. I can see it now just as it was; there I was lying expecting to die; I see a little old man come in .... not a bit stuck up .... rather bald .... he asks for water. Sinner that I was, I thought, 'What is he prowling round here for?' And think what he did! As soon as he saw us, he took off his sack, and set it right down on that spot, and untied it."

And the little girl broke in.

"No," says she, "babushka; first he set his sack right in the middle of the hut, and then he put it on the bench."

And they began to discuss it, and to recall all his words and actions; both where he sat, and where he slept, and what he did, and what he said to any of them.

At nightfall came the muzhik on horseback; he, also, began to tell about Yeliseĭ, and how he had stayed with them.

"If he had not come to us," says he, "we should all have died in our sins. We were perishing in despair; we murmured against God and against men. But he set us on our feet; and through him we learned to know God, and we have come to believe that there are good people. Christ save him! Before, we lived like cattle; he made us human beings again."

The people fed Yefim, giving him all he wanted to drink; they settled him for the night, and they themselves lay down to sleep.

But Yefim was unable to sleep; and the thought would not leave his mind, how he had seen Yeliseï in Jerusalem three times in the foremost place.

"That 's how he got there before me," he said to himself. "My labors may, or may not, be accepted; but the Lord has accepted his."

In the morning the people wished Yefim good speed; they loaded him with pirozhki for his journey, and they went to their work; and Yefim started on his way.

CHAPTER XII

Yefim had been gone exactly a year. In the spring he returned home.

He reached home in the evening. His son was not at home; he was at the tavern. His son came home tipsy. Yefim began to question him. In all respects he saw that the young man had got into bad ways during his absence. He had spent all the money badly, he had neglected things. The father began to reprimand him. The son began to be impudent.

"You yourself might have stirred about a little," says he, "but you went wandering. Yes, and you took all the money with you besides, and then you call me to account!"

The father grew angry, and beat his son.

In the morning Yefim Tarasuitch started for the starosta's to talk with him about his son; he passed by Yeliseï's dvor. Yeliseï's old woman was standing on the doorsteps; she greeted him.

"How 's your health, neighbor?" said she; "did you have a good pilgrimage?"

Yefim Tarasuitch stopped.

"Glory to God," says he, "I have got back! I lost your old man, but I hear he is at home!"

And the old woman began to talk. She was very fond of prattling.

"He got back," says she, "good neighbor; he got back long ago. Very soon after the Assumption. And glad enough we were that God brought him. It was lonely for us without him. He is n't good for much work — his day is done; but he is the head, and we are happier. And how glad our lad was! 'Without father,' says he, 'it 's like being without light in the eye.' It was lonely for us without him; we love him and we missed him so!"

"Well, is he at home now?"

"Yes, friend, he 's with the bees: he 's hiving the new swarms. Splendid swarms! such a power of bees God never gave, as far as my old man remembers. God does n't grant according to our sins, he says. Come in, neighbor; how glad he 'll be to see you!"

Yefim passed through the vestibule, through the yard, to the apiary, where Yeliseï was. He went into the apiary, he looked — there was Yeliseï standing under a little birch tree, without a net, without gloves, in his gray kaftan, spreading out his arms, and looking up; and the bald spot over his whole head gleamed just as when he stood in Jerusalem at the Lord's sepulcher; and over him, just as in Jerusalem the candles burned, the sunlight played through the birch tree; and around his head the golden bees were circling, flying in and out, and they did not sting him.

Yefim stood still.

Yeliseï's old woman called to her husband.

"Our neighbor 's come," says she.

Yeliseï looked around, was delighted, and came to meet his companion, calmly detaching the bees from his beard.

"How are you, comrade, how are you, my dear friend! — did you have a good journey?"

"My feet went on the pilgrimage, and I have brought you some water from the river Jordan. Come .... you shall have it .... but whether the Lord accepted my labors .... "

"Well, glory to God, Christ save us!"

Yefim was silent for a moment.

"My legs took me there, but whether it was my soul that was there or another's...."

"That is God's affair, comrade, God's affair."

"On my way back I stopped also.... at the hut where you left me...."

Yeliseï became confused; he hastened to repeat:—

"It 's God's affair, comrade, God's affair. What say you? shall we go into the izba?—I will bring you some honey."

And Yeliseï changed the conversation; he spoke about domestic affairs.

Yefim sighed, and did not again remind Yeliseï of the people in the hut, and the vision of him that he had seen in Jerusalem.

And he learned that in this world God bids every one do his duty till death—in love and good deeds.

TEXTS FOR WOODCUTS

(1885)

THE DEVIL'S PERSISTENT, BUT GOD IS RESISTANT[1]

THERE lived in olden times a good master.[2] He had plenty of everything, and many slaves served him. And the slaves used to praise their master.[3] They said: —

"There is not a better master under heaven, than ours. He not only feeds us and clothes us well, and gives us work according to our strength, but he never insults any of us, and never gets angry with us; he is not like other masters, who treat their slaves worse than cattle, and put them to death whether they are to blame or not, and never say a kind word to them. Our master wishes us well, and treats us kindly, and says kind things to us. We could n't have a better life than ours."

Thus the slaves praised their master.

And here the Devil began to get vexed because the slaves lived in comfort and love with their master.

And the Devil got hold of one of this master's slaves named Alyeb. He got hold of him and commanded him to entice the other slaves.

And when all the slaves were taking their rest, and were praising their master, Alyeb raised his voice, and said: —

"It 's all nonsense your praising our master's goodness. Try to humor the Devil, and the Devil will be good. We serve our master well, we humor him in all things. As soon as he thinks of anything, we do it;

[1] *Vrazhye Lyepko a Bozhye Kryepko.*
[2] *Khozyaïn.* [3] *Gospodin,* Lord.

we divine his thoughts. How make him be not good to us? Just stop humoring him, and do bad work for him, and he will be like all the others, and he will return evil for evil worse than the crossest of masters."

And the other slaves began to argue with Alyeb. And they argued, and laid a wager. Alyeb undertook to make their kind master angry. He undertook it on the condition that, if he did not make him angry, he should give his holiday clothes; but if he should make him angry, then they agreed to give him, each one of them, their holiday clothes; and, moreover, they agreed to protect him from their master, if he should be put in irons, or, if thrown in prison, to free him. They laid the wager, and Alyeb promised to make their master angry the next morning.

Alyeb served his master in the sheep-cote; he had charge of the costly breeding-rams.

And here in the morning the good master came with some guests to the sheep-cote, and began to show them his beloved, costly rams. The Devil's accomplice winked to his comrades:—

"Look! I'll soon get the master angry."

All the slaves had gathered. They peered in at the door and through the fence; and the Devil climbed into a tree, and looked down into the dvor, to see how his accomplice would do his work.

The master came round the dvor, showed his guests his sheep and lambs, and then was going to show his best ram.

"The other rams," says he, "are good; but this one here, the one with the twisted horns, is priceless; he is more precious to me than my eyes."

The sheep and rams were jumping about the dvor to avoid the people, and the guests were unable to examine the valuable ram. This ram would scarcely come to a stop before the Devil's accomplice, as if accidentally, would scare the sheep, and again they would get mixed up.

The guests were unable to make out which was the priceless ram.

Here the master became tired. He said: —

"Alyeb, my dear, just try to catch the best ram with the wrinkled horns, and hold him. Be careful."

And, as soon as the master said this, Alyeb threw himself, like a lion, amid the rams, and caught the priceless ram by the wool. He caught him by the wool, and instantly grabbed him with one hand by the left hind leg, lifted it up, and, right before the master's eyes, bent his leg, and it cracked like a dry stick. Alyeb broke the precious ram's leg below the knee. The ram bleated, and fell on his fore knees. Alyeb grabbed him by the right leg; but the left turned inside out, and hung down like a whip. The guests and all the slaves groaned, and the Devil rejoiced when he saw how cleverly Alyeb had done his job.

The master grew darker than night, frowned, hung his head, and said not a word. The guests and slaves were also silent. .... They waited to see what would happen.

The master kept silent awhile; then he shook himself, as if trying to throw off something, and raised his head, and turned his eyes heavenward. Not long he gazed before the wrinkles on his brow disappeared; he smiled, and fixed his eyes on Alyeb. He looked at Alyeb, smiled again, and said: —

"O Alyeb, Alyeb! Thy master told thee to make me angry. But my master is stronger than thine, and thou hast not led me into anger; but I shall make thy master angry. Thou wert afraid that I would punish thee, and hast wished to be free, Alyeb. Know, then, that thy punishment will not come from me; but as thou art anxious for thy freedom, here, in the presence of my guests, I give thee thy freedom. Go wherever it may please thee,[1] and take thy holiday clothes."

And the kind master went back to the house with his guests. But the Devil gnashed his teeth, fell from the tree, and sank through the earth.

[1] Literally, "to all four sides or directions."

LITTLE GIRLS WISER THAN THEIR ELDERS

EASTER was early. Folks had just ceased going in sledges. The snow still lay in the courtyards, and little streams ran through the village. In an alley between two dvors a large pool had collected from the dung-heaps. And near this pool were standing two little girls from either dvor, — one of them younger, the other older.

The mothers of the two little girls had dressed them in new sarafans, — the younger one's blue, the elder's of yellow flowered damask. Both wore red handkerchiefs. The little girls, after mass was over, had gone to the pool, shown each other their dresses, and begun to play. And the whim seized them to splash in the water. The younger one was just going to wade into the pool with her little slippers on; but the older one said: —

"Don't do it, Malashka .... your mother will scold. I 'm going to take off my shoes and stockings .... you take off yours."

The little girls took off their shoes and stockings, held up their clothes, and went into the pool so as to meet. Malashka waded in up to her ankles, and said: —

"It 's deep, Akulyushka[1] .... I am afraid."

"Nonsense! It won't be any deeper. Come straight toward me."

They approached nearer and nearer to each other. And Akulka said: —

"Be careful, Malashka, don't splash, but go more slowly."

But the words were hardly out of her mouth, when Malashka put her foot down into the water; it splashed directly on Akulka's sarafan. The sarafan was well spattered, and the water flew into her nose and eyes.

Akulka saw the spots on her sarafan; she became

[1] Akulka and Akulyushka, diminutives of Akulina, colloquial for Akilina, Aquilina. Malashka is diminutive of Malanya, colloquial for Melania, Melaine. — ED.

angry with Malashka, scolded her, ran after her, tried to slap her.

Malashka was frightened when she saw what mischief she had done; she sprang out of the pool, and hastened home.

Akulka's mother happened to pass by and saw her little daughter's sarafan spattered, and her shirt bedaubed.

"How did you get yourself all covered with dirt, you good-for-nothing?"

"Malashka spattered me on purpose."

Akulka's mother caught Malashka, and struck her on the back of the head.

Malashka howled along the whole street. Malashka's mother came out: —

"What are you striking my daughter for?"

She began to scold her neighbor. A word for a word; the women got into a quarrel. The muzhiks hastened out, a great crowd gathered on the street. All were screaming. No one would listen to any one. They quarreled, and the one jostled the other; there was a general row imminent: but an old woman, Akulka's grandmother,[1] interfered.

She came out into the midst of the muzhiks, and began to speak.

"What are you doing, neighbors? What day is it? We ought to rejoice. And you are doing such wrong things!"

They did not heed the old woman; they almost struck her. And the old woman would never have succeeded in persuading them, had it not been for Akulka and Malashka. While the women were keeping up the quarrel, Akulka cleaned her sarafanchik, and came out again to the pool in the alley. She picked up a little stone, and began to clear away the earth by the pool, so as to let the water run into the street.

While she was cleaning it out, Malashka also came along and began to help her — to make a little gutter with a splinter.

[1] *Babka.*

The muzhiks were just coming to blows when the water reached the street, flowing through the gutter made by the little girls; and it went straight to the very spot where the old woman was trying to separate the muzhiks.

The little girls were chasing it, one on one side, the other on the other, of the runnel.

"Hold it back, Malashka! hold it!" cried Akulka. Malashka also tried to say something, but she laughed so that she could not speak.

Thus the little girls were chasing it, and laughing as the splinter swam down the runnel.

They ran right into the midst of the muzhiks. The old woman saw them, and she said to the muzhiks:—

"You should fear God, you muzhiks! It was on account of these same little girls that you picked a quarrel, but they forgot all about it long ago; dear little things, they are playing together lovingly again."

The muzhiks looked at the little girls, and felt ashamed. Then the muzhiks laughed at themselves, and went home to their dvors.

"*If ye are not like little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"

TWO BROTHERS AND GOLD

Once upon a time, there lived, not far from Jerusalem, two brothers, the elder Afanasi, and the younger one Ioann. They lived on a mountain, not far from the city, and subsisted on what men gave them. The brothers spent all their time in work. They did not work for themselves, but for the poor. Wherever there were people worn out by work, wherever they were ill, or orphans or widows, there the brothers would go, and there they would work, and on their departure take no pay. Thus the brothers would spend a whole week at a time, and only on Saturday evening would they come back to their dwelling. Only on Sunday they stayed at home, praying and talking. And the angel of the Lord

came to them and blessed them. On Monday they parted, each going his own way.

Thus the brothers lived many summers; and every week the angel of the Lord came to them, and blessed them.

One Monday, when the brothers were going out to work, and had already started in different directions, the elder, Afanasi, began to feel sorry to part from his beloved brother; and he halted, and looked back. Ioann was walking on his way, with head bent, and not looking back.

But suddenly Ioann also stopped, and, as if he saw something, began to gaze back intently, shading his eyes with his hand. Then he approached what he was looking at; then suddenly he leaped to one side, and, without looking round, ran to the base of the mountain, and up the mountain, away from that place, as if a wild beast were pursuing him.

Afanasi was surprised, and turned back to the place to see what had scared his brother so.

As he approached nearer, he saw something glistening in the sun. He came still nearer. On the grass, as if thrown out from a measure, a heap of gold was lying. ....

And Afanasi was still more astonished, both at the gold and at his brother's flight.

"What scared him? and why did he run away?" Afanasi asked himself. "There is no sin in gold: sin is in man. Gold can do no harm: it may do good. How many widows and orphans this gold can nourish! how many naked it can clothe! how many poor and sick it can heal! We are now serving-men; but our service is small, just as our strength is small. But with this gold, we can be of better service to people."

Thus reasoned Afanasi, and he wanted to tell all this to his brother; but Ioann was already gone out of hearing, and could only be seen now like a little beetle on the other mountain.

And Afanasi took off his coat, filled it with as much gold as he had strength to lug, put it on his shoulder,

and carried it to the city. He came to a hotel, deposited the gold with the hotel-keeper, and went for the rest of it.

And when he had got all the gold, he went to the merchants, bought land in the city, bought stone and lumber, engaged laborers, and began to build three houses.

And Afanasi lived in the city three months. He built in the city three houses, — one house, an asylum for widows and orphans; the second house, a hospital for the sick and poverty-stricken; the third house, for pilgrims and beggars.

And Afanasi found three pious old men; and one of them he placed over the asylum, the other over the hospital, and the third over the pilgrims' home.

And still Afanasi had left three thousand gold pieces. And he gave to each of the old men a thousand to distribute among the poor.

And all three of the houses began to fill with people, and men began to praise Afanasi for all that he had done. And Afanasi was so delighted at this, that he did not care to leave the city.

But Afanasi loved his brother; and, having said good-by to the people, and not leaving himself any money at all, and wearing the very same old clothes in which he had come, he went back to his house.

And as Afanasi was approaching his mountain, he kept thinking: —

"My brother reasoned wrong when he jumped away from the gold and fled. Have n't I done better?"

And this thought had scarcely occurred to Afanasi, when suddenly he saw standing, directly in his path, the same angel who had blessed them; he looked sternly at him.

And Afanasi was stupefied, and could only say: —

"What is it, Lord?"

And the angel opened his lips, and said: —

"Get thee hence! Thou art unworthy to live with thy brother. Thy brother's one leap is worth more than all those things that thou hast done with thy gold."

And Afanasi began to tell how many poor and wanderers he had fed, how many orphans he had cared for.

And the angel said to him: —

"The Devil, who put down the gold to seduce thee, also taught thee these words."

And then Afanasi felt the prick of conscience, and understood that he had not done these deeds for God's sake; and he burst into tears, and began to repent.

Then the angel stepped out of the road, and allowed him to pass; and there stood Ioann, waiting for his brother. And from that time Afanasi did not yield to the temptation of the Devil who had scattered the gold; and he learned that God and men can be served, not by gold, but only by labor.

And the brothers continued to live as before.

ILYAS

There lived in the government of Ufa a Bashkir by the name of Ilyas. When his father died, Ilyas was left by no means rich, but the year before his father had got him a wife, and at that time Ilyas's possessions consisted of seven mares, two cows, and a score of sheep. Now Ilyas was a good manager,[1] and he began to gain; from morning till night he and his wife worked; he got up earlier than any one else, and went to bed later than any one else, and each year he kept getting richer.

Thus Ilyas toiled for thirty-five years, and he made a great fortune. He had two hundred head of horse, a hundred and fifty head of horned cattle, and twelve hundred sheep. The servants pastured the flocks and herds; and the maid-servants milked the mares and cows, and made kumys, butter, and cheese.

Ilyas had plenty of everything, and every one round about envied Ilyas's life. Men said: —

"Lucky man, Ilyas. He has plenty of everything; he does n't need to die."

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

Fine people began to get acquainted with Ilyas, and associate with him. And guests came to visit him from far and near. And Ilyas received them all, and gave them all food and drink. Whoever came had kumys; all had tea, chowder,[1] and mutton. As soon as guests came, he would immediately have a ram or two killed: and if many came, they would have a mare also killed.

Ilyas had two sons and a daughter. He married off his sons, and got his daughter a husband. When Ilyas was poor, his sons worked with him, and they themselves pastured the flocks and herds; but as they became rich, the sons began to get spoiled, and one took to drinking.

One, the elder, was killed in a brawl; and the other, the younger, got a proud wife; and this son began to be disobedient to his father, and Ilyas was compelled to banish him.

Ilyas banished him, but gave him a house and cattle; and Ilyas's wealth was diminished. And soon after this a distemper fell upon Ilyas's sheep, and many perished. Then there came a year of famine; the hay did not ripen; many cattle died during the winter. Then the Kirgiz carried off his best horses, and Ilyas's property was still further diminished.

Ilyas began to fall lower and lower. And his strength was less than it had been. And at the age of seventy years, Ilyas had come to such a pass that he began to sell out his furs, his carpets, saddles, and kibitkas; and then he had to dispose of his last cattle, and Ilyas came to nothing.

He himself did not realize how he had nothing left; but he and his wife were obliged, in their old age, to hire out as servants. All Ilyas's possessions consisted of the clothes on his body, his shuba, a hat, shoes, and slippers — yes, and his wife, Sham-Shemagi, now an old woman. His banished son had gone to a far-off land, and his daughter died. And then there was no one to help the old people.

Their neighbor, Muhamedshah, felt sorry for the old people. Muhamedshah himself was neither poor nor

[1] *Sherba*, or *shcherba*, fish-broth.

rich, but lived in medium circumstances; and he was a good man.

He remembered Ilyas's hospitality,[1] and pitied him, and said to Ilyas:—

"Come, Ilyas," says he, "and live with me — you and your old woman. In summer you can work for me in the garden, and in winter take care of the cattle; and Sham-Shemagi may milk the mares, and make kumys. I will feed and clothe you both; and whatever you need, tell me; I will give it."

Ilyas thanked his neighbor, and he and his wife began to live with Muhamedshah as servants. At first it came hard to them, but afterward they got used to it; and the old people went on living and working as much as their strength permitted.

The khozyaïn found it profitable to keep such people, because they had been masters[2] themselves, and knew how to keep things orderly, and were not lazy, and worked according to their strength; only Muhamedshah felt sorry to see how people of such high station should have fallen to such a low condition.

Once it came to pass that some guests, some kinsmen from a distance, came to visit Muhamedshah; a Mulla[3] came with them.

Muhamedshah gave orders to have a ram caught and killed. Ilyas dressed the ram, cooked it, and served it to the guests. The guests ate the mutton, drank some tea, and took some kumys.

While the guests were sitting with the khozyaïn on down pillows, on carpets, and were drinking kumys out of cups, and chatting, Ilyas had finished his chores, and was passing in front of the door.

Muhamedshah saw him, and asked a guest:—

"Did you see that old man who went by the door?"

"I saw him," said the guest; "but what is there remarkable about him?"

[1] *Khlyeb-sol;* literally, bread-salt.

[2] *Khozyaeva.*

[3] *Mulla* or *Molla*, a sort of title given to priest and teachers among the Mohammedans.

"This is remarkable, — he was once our richest man. His name is Ilyas; maybe you have heard of him?"

"Certainly I have," said the guest. "I never saw him before, but his fame has been widespread."

"Now he has nothing at all left, and lives out at service with me; he and his old woman milk the cows."

The guest was amazed, clucked with his tongue, shook his head, and said: —

"Yes, this shows how fortune turns round like a wheel; he who is on top gets to the bottom. Well, I suppose the old man feels pretty bad about it?"

"Who can tell about him? He lives quietly, peacefully; works well."

The guest said: —

"May I have a talk with him? I should like to ask him about his life."

"Well, you can," says the khozyaïn, and shouts toward the kibitka, "Babaï,[1] come in; bring some kumys, and call your old woman."

So Ilyas came with his wife. He greeted the guests and his master, repeated a prayer, and squatted down by the door. But his wife went behind the curtain, and sat with her mistress.

Ilyas was given a cup of kumys. Ilyas wished the health of the guests and of his master, bowed, sipped a little, and set it down.

"Well, dyedushka," says the guest, "I suppose you feel rather blue looking at us, to remember your past life, — how you used to be in luck, and how now your life is spent in sorrow?"

And Ilyas smiled and said: —

"If I told you about my fortune and misfortune, you would not believe me. Better ask my wife. She is a woman, — what 's in her heart 's on her tongue also. She will tell you the whole truth about this matter."

And the guest spoke to her behind the curtain: "Well, now, babushka, tell us what you think about your former luck, and your present misfortune."

[1] *Babaï*, signifies *dyedushka*, little grandfather, in Bashkirian. — AUTHOR'S NOTE IN TEXT.

And Sham-Shemagi spoke from behind the curtain: —

"This is what I think about it: my old man and I have lived fifty years. We sought for happiness, and did not find it; and now here it is two years since we lost everything, and have been living out at service; and we have found real happiness, and ask for nothing better."

The guests were amazed; and the khozyaïn was amazed, and even rose from his seat, lifted the curtain to look at the old woman; and the old woman was standing, with folded arms. She smiled as she looked at her old man, and the old man smiled back.

The old woman went on: —

"I am speaking the truth, not jesting. We sought for happiness for half a century, and as long as we were rich we did not find it; but now that we have nothing left, and have to go out to service, we have found such happiness that we ask for nothing better."

"But wherein consists your happiness now?"

"Well, in this: while we were rich, my old man and I never had an hour's rest. We never had time to talk, nor to think about our souls, nor to pray to God. There was nothing for us but care. When we had guests, it was a bother how to treat them, what to give them, so that they might not talk ill about us. Then, when guests went away, we had to look after our workpeople; they would have to rest, they would have to be furnished with enough to eat, and we would have to see to it that nothing that was ours got lost. So we sinned. Then, again, there was worry lest the wolf should kill a colt or a calf, or lest thieves should drive off our horses. We would lie down to sleep, but could not sleep for fear the sheep should trample the lambs. We would go out, we would walk in the night; and at last, when we would get ourselves calmed down, then, again, there would be anxiety about getting food for the winter. Besides this, my old man and I never agreed. He would say we must do so, and I would say we must do *so;* and we would begin to quarrel; so we sinned. So we lived in worry and care, in worry and care, and never knew the happiness of life."

"Well, and now?"

"Now, when my old man and I get up in the morning, we always have a talk, in love and sympathy, we have nothing to quarrel about, nothing to worry about; our only care is to serve our khozyaïn. We work according to our strength, we work willingly, so that our khozyaïn may not lose, but gain. When we come in, we have dinner, we have supper, we have kumys. If it is cold, we have our kizyak[1] to warm us, and a sheepskin shuba. And we have time to talk and think about our souls, and to pray to God. For fifty years we sought for happiness, and only now we have found it!"

The guests began to laugh.

But Ilyas said: —

"Don't laugh, brothers; this thing is no jest, but human life. And the old woman and I were foolish when we wept over the loss of our property, but now God has revealed the truth to us; and it is not for our own consolation, but for your good, that we reveal it to you."

And the Mulla said: —

"This is a wise saying, and Ilyas has told the exact truth; and this is written also in the Scriptures."

And the guests ceased laughing, and were lost in thought.

[1] *Kizyak* or *tizyak*, a Tartar word meaning a brick made of dried dung.

THE THREE HERMITS

(1886)

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
Be ye not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." — MATT. vi. 6, 7.

A BISHOP set sail in a ship from the city of Archangelsk to Solovki.[1] In the same ship sailed some pilgrims to the saints.

The wind was propitious, the weather was clear, the sea was not rough. The pilgrims, some of whom were lying down, some lunching, some sitting in little groups, conversed together.

The bishop also came on deck and began to walk up and down on the bridge. As he approached the bow, he saw a knot of people crowded together. A little muzhik was pointing his hand at something in the sea, and talking; and the people were listening.

The bishop stood still, and looked where the little muzhik was pointing; nothing was to be seen, except the sea glittering in the sun.

The bishop came closer and began to listen. When the little muzhik saw the bishop, he took off his cap, and stopped speaking. The people also, when they saw the bishop, took off their hats, and paid their respects.

"Don't mind me, brothers," said the bishop. "I have also come to listen to what you are saying, my good friend."

[1] The Slovetsky Monastery, at the mouth of the Dvina River.

"This fisherman was telling us about some hermits,"[1] said a merchant, who was bolder than the rest.

"What about the hermits?" asked the bishop, as he came to the gunwale, and sat down on a box. "Tell me too; I should like to hear. What were you pointing at?"

"Well, then, yonder 's the little island just heaving in sight," said the little peasant; and he pointed toward the port side. "On that very islet, three hermits live, working out their salvation."

"Where is the little island?" asked the bishop.

"Here, look along my arm, if you please. You see that little cloud? Well, just below it to the left it shows like a streak."

The bishop looked and looked; the water gleamed in the sun, but from lack of practice he could not see anything.

"I don't see it," says he. "What sort of hermits are they who live on the little island?"

"God's people,"[2] replied the peasant. "For a long time I had heard tell of them, but I never chanced to see them until last summer."

And the fisherman again began to relate how he had been out fishing, and how he was driven to that island, and knew not where he was. In the morning he started to look around, and stumbled upon a little earthen hut; and he found in the hut one hermit, and then two others came in. They fed him, and dried him, and helped him repair his boat.

"What sort of men were they?" asked the bishop.

"One was rather small, humpbacked, very, very old; he was dressed in well-worn stole; he must have been more than a hundred years old; the gray hairs in his beard were already turning green; but he always had a smile ready, and he was as serene as an angel of heaven. The second was taller, also old, in a torn kaftan; his long beard was growing a little yellowish, but he was a strong man; he turned my boat over as if it had been a

[1] *Startsui*, plural of *starets*, a venerable man, a monk. The Russian title of the story is *Tri Startsa*.

[2] *Bozhi liudi*, God's men, the usual term for monks, pilgrims, and hermits.

tub, — and I did n't even have to help him: he was also a jolly man. But the third was tall, with a long beard reaching to his knee, and white as the moon; but he was gloomy; his eyes glared out from under beetling brows; and he was naked, all save a plaited belt."

"What did they say to you?" asked the bishop.

"They did everything mostly without speaking, and they talked very little among themselves; one had only to look, and the other understood. I began to ask the tall one if they had lived there long. He frowned, muttered something, grew almost angry: then the little old man instantly seized him by the hand, smiled, and the large man said nothing. But the old man said, 'Excuse us,' and smiled."

While the peasant was speaking, the ship had been sailing nearer and nearer to the islands.

"There, now you can see plainly," said the merchant. "Now please look, your reverence,"[1] said he, pointing.

The bishop tried to look, and he barely managed to make out a black speck — the little island.

The bishop gazed and gazed; and he went from the bow to the stern, and he approached the helmsman.

"What is that little island," says he, "that you see over yonder?"

"As far as I know, it has no name; there are a good many of them here."

"Is it true as they say, that some monks are winning their salvation there?"

"They say so, your reverence, but I don't rightly know. Fishermen, they say, have seen them. Still, folks talk a good deal of nonsense."

"I should like to land on the little island, and see the hermits," said the bishop. "How can I manage it?"

"It is impossible to go there in the ship," said the helmsman. "You might do it in a boat, but you will have to ask the captain."

They summoned the captain.

"I should like to have a sight of those hermits," said

[1] *Vashe preosvyashchenstvo.*

the bishop. "Is it out of the question to take me there?"

The captain tried to dissuade him.

"It is possible, quite possible, but we should waste much time; and I take the liberty of assuring your reverence, they are not worth looking at. I have heard from people that those old men are perfectly stupid; they don't understand anything, and can't say anything, just like some sort of sea-fish."

"I wish it," said the bishop. "I will pay for the trouble, if you will take me there."

There was nothing else to be done: the sailors arranged it; they shifted sail. The helmsman put the ship about and they sailed toward the island. A chair was set for the bishop on the bow. He sat down and looked. And all the people gathered on the bow, all looked at the little island. And those who had trustworthy eyes already began to see rocks on the island, and point out the hut. And one even saw the three hermits. The captain got out a spy-glass, gazed through it, handed it to the bishop.

"He is quite right," said the captain; "there on the shore at the right, standing on a great rock, are three men."

The bishop also looked through the glass; he pointed it in the right direction and plainly saw the three men standing there, — one tall, the second shorter, but the third very short. They were standing on the shore, hand in hand.

The captain came to the bishop: —

"Here, your reverence, the ship must come to anchor; if it suit you, you can be put ashore in a yawl, and we will anchor out here and wait for you."

Immediately they got the tackle ready, cast anchor, and furled the sails; the vessel brought up, began to roll. They lowered a boat, the rowers manned it, and the bishop started to climb down by the companion-way. The bishop climbed down, took his seat on the thwart; the rowers lifted their oars; they sped away to the island. They sped away like a stone from a

sling; they could see the three old men standing, — the tall one naked, with his plaited belt; the shorter one in his torn kaftan; and the little old humpbacked one, in his old stole, — all three were standing there, hand in hand.

The sailors reached shore and caught hold with the boat-hook. The bishop got out.

The hermits bowed before him; he blessed them; they bowed still lower. And the bishop began to speak to them: —

"I heard," says he, "that you hermits were here, working out your salvation, that you pray Christ our God for your fellow-men; and I am here by God's grace, an unworthy servant of Christ, called to be a shepherd to His flock; and so I desired also, if I might, to give instruction to you, who are the servants of God."

The hermits made no reply; they smiled, they exchanged glances.

"Tell me how you are working out your salvation, and how you serve God," said the bishop.

The middle hermit sighed, and looked at the aged one, at the venerable one; the tall hermit frowned, and looked at the aged one, at the venerable one. And the venerable old hermit smiled, and said: —

"Servant of God, we have not the skill to serve God; we only serve ourselves, getting something to eat."

"How do you pray to God?" asked the bishop.

And the venerable hermit said: —

"We pray thus: 'You three, have mercy on us three.'" [1]

And as soon as the venerable hermit said this, all three of the hermits raised their eyes to heaven, and all three said, "*Troe vas, troe nas, pomiluï nas!*"

The bishop smiled, and said: —

"You have heard this about the Holy Trinity, but you should not pray so. I have taken a fancy to you, men of God. I see that you desire to please God, but you know not how to serve Him. You should not pray

[1] *Troe vas, troe nas, pomiluï nas!*

so; but listen to me, I will teach you. I shall not teach you my own words, but shall teach you from God's scriptures how God commanded all people to pray to God."

And the bishop began to explain to the hermits how God revealed Himself to men. He taught them about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and said: —

"God the Son came upon earth to save men, and this is the way He taught all men to pray; listen, and repeat after me" —

And the bishop began to say: —

"*Our Father.*"

And one hermit repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

And then the second repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

And the third also repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

"*Who art in heaven;*" and the hermits tried to repeat, "*Who art in heaven.*"

But the middle hermit mixed the words up, he could not repeat them so; and the tall, naked hermit could not repeat them, — his mustache had grown so as to cover his mouth, he could not speak distinctly; and the venerable, toothless hermit could not stammer the words intelligibly.

The bishop said it a second time; the hermits repeated it again. And the bishop sat down on a little boulder, and the hermits stood about him; and they looked at his lips, and they repeated it after him until they knew it. And all that day till evening the bishop labored with them; and ten times, and twenty times, and a hundred times, he repeated each word, and the hermits learned it by rote. And when they got mixed up, he set them right, and made them begin all over again.

And the bishop did not leave the hermits until he had taught them the whole of the Lord's Prayer. They repeated it after him, and then by themselves.

First of all, the middle hermit learned it, and he re-

peated it from beginning to end; and the bishop bade him say it again and again, and still again to repeat it; and the others also learned the whole prayer.

It was already beginning to grow dark, and the moon was just coming up out of the sea, when the bishop arose to go back to the ship.

The bishop said farewell to the hermits; they all bowed very low before him. He raised them to their feet and kissed each of them, bade them pray as he had taught them; and he took his seat in the boat, and returned to the ship.

And while the bishop was rowed back to the ship, he heard all the time how the hermits were repeating the Lord's Prayer at the top of their voices.

They returned to the ship, and here the voices of the hermits could no longer be heard; but they could still see, in the light of the moon, the three old men standing in the very same place on the shore, — one shorter than the rest in the middle, with the tall one on the right, and the other on the left hand.

The bishop returned to the ship, climbed up on deck; the anchor was hoisted; the sails were spread, and bellied with wind; the ship began to move, and they sailed away.

The bishop came to the stern, and took a seat there, and kept looking at the little island. At first the hermits were to be seen; then they were hidden from sight, and only the island was visible; and then the island went out of sight, and only the sea was left playing in the moonlight.

The pilgrims lay down to sleep, and all was quiet on deck. But the bishop cared not to sleep; he sat by himself in the stern, looked out over the sea in the direction where the island had faded from sight, and thought about the good hermits.

He thought of how they had rejoiced in what they had learned in the prayer; and he thanked God because He had led him to the help of the hermits, in teaching them the word of God.

Thus the bishop was sitting and thinking, looking at

the sea in the direction where the little island lay hidden. And his eyes were filled with the moonlight, as it danced here and there on the waves. Suddenly he saw something shining and gleaming white in the track of the moon. Was it a bird, a gull, or a boat-sail gleaming white? The bishop strained his sight.

"A sail-boat," he said to himself, "is chasing us. Yes, it is catching up with us very rapidly. It was far, far off, but now it is close to us. But, after all, it is not much like a sail-boat. Anyway, something is chasing us, and catching up with us."

And the bishop could not decide what it was, — a boat, or not a boat; a bird, or not a bird; a fish, or not a fish. It was like a man, but very great; but a man could not be in the midst of the sea.

The bishop got up and went to the helmsman.

"Look!" says he, "what is that? what is that, brother? what is it?" said the bishop.

But by this time he himself saw. It was the hermits running over the sea. Their gray beards gleamed white, and shone; and they drew near the ship as if it were stationary.

The helmsman looked. He was scared, dropped the tiller, and cried with a loud voice: —

"Lord! the hermits are running over the sea as if it were dry land!"

The people heard and sprang up; all rushed aft. All beheld the hermits running, hand in hand. The end ones swung their arms; they signaled the ship to come to. All three ran over the water as if it were dry land, and did not move their feet.

It was not possible to bring the ship to before the hermits overtook it, came on board, raised their heads, and said with one voice: —

"We have forgotten, servant of God, we have forgotten what thou didst teach us. While we were learning it, we remembered it; but when we ceased for an hour to repeat it, one word slipped away; we have forgotten it: the whole was lost. We remember none of it; teach it to us again."

The bishop crossed himself, bowed low to the hermits, and said: —

"Acceptable to God is your prayer, ye hermits. It is not for me to teach you. Pray for us, sinners."

And the bishop bowed before the feet of the hermits. And the hermits paused, turned about, and went back over the sea. And until the morning, there was something seen shining in the direction where the hermits had gone.

POPULAR LEGENDS

(1886)

HOW THE LITTLE DEVIL EARNED A CRUST OF BREAD

A POOR muzhik was going out to plow, though he had eaten no breakfast; and he took with him, from the house, a crust of bread. The muzhik turned over his plow, unfastened the bar, put it under the bush; and then he left his crust of bread, and covered it with his kaftan. The horse was almost dead, and the muzhik was very hungry. The muzhik drove in the plow, unhitched the horse, gave her something to eat, and went to his kaftan to get a bite for himself. The muzhik picked up his kaftan; the crust was gone. He searched and searched; turned his kaftan inside out, shook it: there was no crust. The muzhik was amazed.

"This is a marvelous thing," he said to himself. "I have n't seen any one, and yet some one has carried off my crust."

But a little devil[1] had stolen the crust while the muzhik was plowing, and had perched on a shrub to hear how the muzhik would swear, and call him, the devil, by name.

The muzhik was disappointed.

"Well, now, I am not going to die of starvation. Of course the one that took it must have needed it. Let him eat it, and be welcome."

And the muzhik went to the well, got a drink of water, sighed, caught his horse, harnessed her, and began to plow again.

[1] *Chortyonok.*

The little devil was vexed because he had not led the muzhik into sin, and he went to tell about it to the biggest of the devils. He came to the big devil, and told him how he had stolen the crust from the muzhik, who, instead of getting angry, had said, "Be welcome."

The big devil was angry.

"Why," said he, "in this affair the muzhik has got the better of you: you yourself are to blame for it; you did not know how to do it. If," said he, "first muzhiks, and then peasant women, were to be caught by any such trick, it would n't be of any use for us to be in existence. It 's no use doing the thing that way. Go back to the muzhik," said he, "earn that crust. If within three years' time you do not get the better of the muzhik, I 'll give you a bath in holy water."

The little devil was alarmed; he ran back to earth and began to cogitate how he might atone for his fault. He thought and thought, and he thought out a scheme.[1]

The little devil turned himself into a good man, and took service with the poor muzhik. And during a dry summer, he advised the muzhik to sow corn in a swamp. The muzhik took the laborer's advice and sowed in the swamp. The other muzhiks had everything burned up by the sun; but the poor muzhik had dense, high, full-eared corn. The muzhik had enough to live on till the next year; and even then, much corn remained.

That year, the laborer advised the muzhik to plant his grain on the high land. And the summer proved to be rainy. And the people had sowed their corn, but it sweat and the kernels did not fill out; but the muzhik had a quantity of corn ripen on the high land. And the muzhik had still much more corn than he needed, and he knew not what to do with it.

And the laborer taught the muzhik to grind the corn, and distil brandy. The muzhik distilled the brandy and began to drink himself, and gave others to drink.

The little devil came to the big one, and began to boast that he had earned the crust. The big one went to investigate.

[1] *Dumal, dumal i pridumal.*

He went to the muzhik's and saw how he invited the rich men, how he treated them all to brandy. The muzhik's wife offered the brandy to the guests. As she went round the table she hit against it and overturned a glass. The muzhik lost his temper, scolded his wife.

"Look you," says he, "you devilish fool! What makes you slop it so? you are wasting such good whisky, you bandy-legged [goose]!"

The little devil poked the big one with his elbow. "Just look!" said he, and thought how now he would not lack for crusts.

The man[1] kept berating his wife; he himself began to pass round the brandy. A poor peasant came in from his work. He came in without being invited; he greeted those present; he sat down; he saw the people drinking brandy. He also would have liked to have a taste of the brandy. He sat and he sat and he kept swallowing his spittle, but the host did not offer any to him. He only muttered to himself:—

"Why must we furnish everybody with brandy?"

This pleased the big devil; but the little devil bragged.

"Just wait a little, and see what will come of it."

The rich muzhiks were drinking; the host also drank. They all began to fawn on one another, and flatter each other, and to tell rather buttery and scandalous stories. The big devil listened and listened, and he commended him for this.

"If," said he, "such flattery and such deception can come from this drunkenness, then they will all be in our hands."

"Just wait," said the little devil, "what more will come of it. There they are going to drink one little glass more. Now, like little foxes, they are wagging their tails at one another and trying to deceive one another; but just see how, in a short time, they will be acting like fierce wolves."

The muzhiks drained their glasses once more, and

[1] *Khozyaĭn*, master of the house.

their talk became louder and rougher. In place of buttery speeches, they began to indulge in abuse; they began to get angry, and tweak one another's noses. The host also took part in the squabble. Even him they beat unmercifully.

The big devil looked on, and praised him for this also.

"This," said he, "is good."

But the little devil said: —

"Just wait! See what more will happen. Let them take a third drink. Now they are as mad as wolves; but give them time, let them drink once more; they will instantly begin to behave like hogs."

The muzhiks drank for the third time. They lost all control of themselves. They themselves had no idea what they stammered or shrieked, and they talked all at once. They started to go home, each in his own way, or in groups of two and three. They all fell into the gutter. The host went to see his guests out; he fell on his nose in a pool and got all smeared; he lay there like a boar, grunting.

This delighted the big devil still more.

"Well," says he, "this scheme of drunkenness was good. You have earned your crust. Now tell me," says he, "how did you make this liquor? You must have put into it some fox's blood, in the first place: that was what made the muzhik keen as a fox; and then some wolf's blood: that was what made him fierce as a wolf; and finally, of course, you added swine's blood: that made him act like a hog."

"No," said the little devil, "I did nothing of the sort. I only made it for him out of all the superfluous grain. This wild blood always exists in him, but has no way of getting out when the grain is properly used. At first he did not grudge even his last crust; but as soon as he began to have a superfluity of grain, he began to scheme how he might amuse himself. And I taught him the fun, — brandy-drinking. And as soon as he began to distil God's gift for his fun, the blood of the fox and the wolf and the hog began to show itself.

Now all he needs, to be always a beast, is to keep on drinking brandy."

The chief of the devils praised the little devil, forgave him for the crust of bread, and made him one of his staff.

THE REPENTANT SINNER

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." — LUKE xxiii. 42, 43.

ONCE there lived on earth a man seventy years old, and he had spent his whole life in sin. And this man fell ill, and did not make confession. And when death came, at the last hour he wept, and cried: —

"Lord, forgive me as thou didst the thief on the cross."

He had barely spoken these words, when his soul left his body. And the sinner's soul turned in love to God, and believed in His mercy, and came to the gates of paradise.

And the sinner began to knock, and ask admission to the kingdom of heaven.

And he heard a voice from within the gates: —

"What manner of man knocketh at the gates of paradise? and what have been the deeds done by this man in his life?"

And the voice of the accuser replied, and rehearsed all the sinful deeds of this man. And he did not mention one good deed.

And the voice from within the gates replied: —

"Sinners cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Get thee hence!"

And the man said: —

"Lord, I hear thy voice; but I see not thy face, and I know not thy name."

And the voice replied: —

"I am Peter the Apostle."

And the sinner said: —

"Have pity upon me, Peter Apostle! Remember human weakness and God's mercy. Wert thou not one of Christ's disciples? and didst thou not hear from His very lips His teaching? and hast thou not seen the example of His life? And remember, when He was in sorrow, and His soul was cast down, and thrice He asked thee to watch with Him and pray, and thou didst sleep, for thy eyes were heavy, and thrice He found thee sleeping. So it was with me.

"And remember also how thou didst promise Him not to deny Him till death, and how thrice thou didst deny Him when they took Him before Caiaphas. So it was with me.

"And remember, also, how the cock crew, and thou didst go out and weep bitterly. So it is with me. It is impossible for thee not to let me in."

And the voice from within the gates of paradise was silent.

And, after waiting awhile, the sinner began again to knock, and to demand entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

And a second voice was heard within the doors; and it said:—

"Who is this man, and how did he live in the world?"

And the voice of the accuser again rehearsed all the sinner's evil deeds, and mentioned no good deeds.

And the voice from within the gates replied:—

"Get thee gone! Sinners like thee cannot live with us in paradise."

And the sinner said:—

"Lord, I hear thy voice; but I see not thy face, and I know not thy name."

And the voice replied:—

"I am David, the tsar and prophet."

And the sinner did not despair, did not depart from the gates of paradise, but began to say:—

"Have mercy upon me, Tsar David, and remember human weakness and God's mercy. God loved thee, and magnified thee before the people. Thou hadst

everything, — a kingdom and glory and wealth, and wives and children; and yet thou didst see from thy roof a poor man's wife; and sin came upon thee, and thou didst take Uriah's wife, and thou didst kill him by the sword of the Ammonites. Thou, a rich man, didst take the poor man's lamb, and kill the man himself. This was exactly what I did.

"And remember next how thou didst repent, and say, *I acknowledge my sin, and am grieved because of my transgressions.* So did I also. It is impossible for thee not to forgive me."

And the voice within the gates was silent.

And after waiting a little longer, yet again the sinner knocked, and demanded entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

And a third voice was heard from behind the gates; and it said: —

"Who is this man, and how did he live in the world?"

And the voice of the accuser replied, and for the third time rehearsed the man's evil deeds, and no good ones did it mention.

And the voice sounded from behind the gates: —

"Get thee gone! Sinners cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

And the sinner replied: —

"I hear thy voice; but thy face I see not, and thy name I know not."

And the voice replied: —

"I am John, the beloved disciple of Christ."

And the sinner rejoiced, and said: —

"Now it is impossible not to let me in! Peter and David would admit me because they know human weakness and God's mercy. But thou wilt admit me because thou hast much love. Hast thou not written, O John, in thy book, that God is love, and that whoever doth not love knoweth not God? And didst thou not in thine old age constantly say one single word to men, — 'Brothers, love one another'? How, then, canst thou hate me and reject me? Either deny thy saying, or show love unto me, and let me into the kingdom of heaven."

And the gates of paradise opened; and John received the repentant sinner, and let him come into the kingdom of heaven.

A SEED AS BIG AS A HEN'S EGG

Some children once found in a cave something as large as a hen's egg, with a groove about the middle, and like a seed. A passer-by saw the children playing with it, bought it for a trifle,[1] took it to the city, and gave it to the tsar as a curiosity.

The tsar summoned his wise men, and commanded them to decide what kind of a thing it was, — an egg, or a seed. The wise men cogitated, cogitated; they could not give an answer. The thing was lying in the window; and a hen flew in, began to peck at it, and pecked a hole in it; and all knew that it was a seed.

The wise men went to the tsar, and said: —

"This is a kernel of rye."

The tsar marveled. He commanded the wise men to find out where and when this seed grew. The wise men cogitated, cogitated; they hunted in books, but they found no explanation. They came to the tsar, and said: —

"We cannot give an answer. In our books, there is nothing written about this; we must ask the muzhiks whether some one of their elders has not heard tell of when and where such a seed was sown."

The tsar sent, and commanded a very aged muzhik to be brought before him. They found such an old man, and brought him to the tsar. The green, toothless starik came in; he walked with difficulty on two crutches.

The tsar showed him the seed, but the old man was almost blind; he judged of it, as it were, partly by looking at it, partly by fumbling it in his hands.

The tsar began to ask him questions: —

"Do you not know where such a seed grows? Have

[1] *P'yatak*, a copper piece worth five kopeks.

you never sown any such kind of grain in your field? Or did you never in your life purchase any such seed?"

The old man was stupid; he could barely, barely hear, barely, barely understand. He began to make reply.

"No," said he, "I never sowed any such grain in my field, and I never harvested any such, and I never bought any such. When we bought grain, all such seed was small. But," said he, "you must ask my batyushka; maybe he 's heard tell where such seed grew."

So the tsar sent for the old man's father, and bade him be brought before him. The ancient old man[1] hobbled in on one crutch. The tsar began to show him the seed. The old man could still see with his eyes. He saw very well. The tsar began to question him: —

"Do you not know, my dear old man,[2] where this seed can have grown? Have you never sown such grain in your field? or did you never in your life purchase such seed anywhere?"

Though the old man was rather hard of hearing, still he heard better than his son.

"No," says he, "I never sowed such seed in my field, nor such did I ever harvest; nor such did I ever buy, because in my day there was not money anywhere; we all lived on grain; and when it was necessary, we went shares with one another. I don't know where such seed is grown. Though our seed was much larger and more productive than that of nowadays, still I never saw such as this. But I have heard from my batyushka that, in his day, corn grew much higher than it does now, and was fuller, and had larger kernels. You must ask him."

The tsar sent for this old man's father. And they brought the grandfather also. They brought him to the tsar. The old man came before the tsar without crutches; he walked easily, his eyes were brilliant, he heard well, and spoke understandingly.

The tsar showed the seed to the old man. The old man looked at it. The old man turned it over and over.

[1] *Starik starui.* [2] *Starichok*, diminutive of *starik.*

"It is long," said he, "since I have seen such good old-fashioned grain."

The grandfather took a bite of the seed and chewed on the fragment.

"It 's the very thing," said he.

"Tell me, little grandfather, where and when this kind of seed grows? Did you never sow such grain in your field? Or did you never in your life buy any such among people?"

And the old man said: —

"Such grain as this used to grow everywhere in my day. On such grain as this I have lived all my life," says he, "and fed my people. This kind of seed I have sown, and this kind I have reaped, and this kind I have sent to mill."

And the tsar asked, saying: —

"Tell me, little grandfather, did you buy such seed anywhere? or did you sow it in your field?"

The old man laughed.

"In my time," said he, "no one had ever conceived such a sin as to buy and sell grain. And they did not know about money. There was abundance of grain for all."

And the tsar asked, saying: —

"Tell me, little grandfather, when did you sow such grain, and where was your field?"

And the grandfather said: —

"My field was God's earth. Wherever there was tillage, there was my field. The earth was free. There was no such thing as private ownership. All men claimed was their work."

"Tell me," said the tsar, "tell me two things more: one thing, Why did such seed use to spring up, and now does not? And the second thing, Why does your grandson walk on two crutches, and your son on one crutch, but here you go with perfect ease — and your eyes are bright, and your teeth strong, and your speech plain and clear? Tell me, little grandfather, why these things are so?"

And the old man said: —

"These two things both came about because men have ceased to live by their own work — and they have begun to hanker after other people's things. We did not live so in old times; in old times we lived for God. We had our own, and did not lust after others'."

HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?

I

A WOMAN came from the city, to visit her younger sister in the country. The elder was a city merchant's wife; the younger, a country muzhik's. The two sisters drank tea together and talked. The older sister began to boast — to praise up her life in the city; how she lived roomily and elegantly, and went out, and how she dressed her children, and what rich things she had to eat and drink, and how she went to drive, and to walk, and to the theater.

The younger sister felt affronted, and began to depreciate the life of a merchant, and to set forth the advantages of her own, — that of the peasant.

"I would n't exchange my life for yours," says she. "Granted that we live coarsely, still we don't know what fear is. You live more elegantly; but you have to sell a great deal, else you find yourselves entirely sold. And the proverb runs, 'Loss is Gain's bigger brother.' It also happens, to-day you 're rich, but to-morrow you 're a beggar.[1] But our muzhiks' affairs are more reliable; the muzhik's life is meager, but long; we may not be rich, but we have enough."

The elder sister began to say: —

"Enough, — I should think so! So do pigs and calves! No fine dresses, no good society. How your goodman[2] works! how you live in the dunghill! and so you will die and it will be the same thing with your children."

[1] Literally, find thyself under the windows.
[2] *Khozyain.*

"Indeed," said the younger, "our affairs are all right. We live well. We truckle to no one, we stand in fear of no one. But you in the city all live in the midst of temptations: to-day it 's all right; but to-morrow up comes some improper person, I fear, to tempt you, and tempts your khozyaïn either to cards, or to wine, or to women. And everything goes to ruin. Is n't it so?"

Pakhom, the "goodman," was listening on the oven, as the women discussed.

"That 's true," says he, "the veritable truth. As we peasants [1] from childhood turn up mother earth,[2] so folly stays in our head, and does not depart. Our one trouble is, — so little land. If I only had as much land as I wanted, I should n't be afraid of any one — even of the Devil."

The women drank up their tea, talked some more about dresses, put away the dishes, and went to bed.

But the Devil was sitting behind the oven; he heard everything. He was delighted because the peasant woman had induced her husband to boast with her; he had boasted that, if he had land enough, the Devil could not get him!

"All right," he thinks; "you and I 'll have to fight it out. I will give you a lot of land. I 'll get you through the land."

II

Next the muzhiks lived a lady.[3] She had one hundred and twenty desyatins[4] of land. And she had always lived peaceably with the muzhiks, never taking any advantage of them. But a retired soldier engaged himself as her overseer, and he began to vex the muzhiks with fines. No matter how careful Pakhom was, either his horse would trample down the oats, or his cow would

[1] *Nash brat;* literally, our brother.
[2] *Zemlya-matushka.*
[3] *Baruinka,* diminutive of *baruinya,* gracious lady.
[4] Three hundred and twenty-four acres.

wander into the garden, or his calves would get into the meadows; there was a fine for everything.

Pakhom paid the fines, and scolded and beat the domestics. And during the summer Pakhom fell into many a sin on account of this overseer. And still he was glad that he had cattle in his dvor; though fodder was scarce, he was in no apprehension.

During the winter, the rumor spread that the lady was going to sell her land, and that a dvornik from the highway had made arrangements to buy it.

The muzhiks heard it, and groaned.

"Now," think they, "the land will belong to the dvornik; he will make us pay worse fines than the lady did. It is impossible for us to live without this land. All of us around here live on it."

The peasants went to the lady in a body and began to beg her not to sell the land to the dvornik, but to let them have it. They promised to pay a higher price.

The lady agreed. The muzhiks tried to arrange, as a mir, to buy all the land. Once, twice, they collected in meeting, but there was a hitch in affairs. The evil one put them at variance; they were utterly unable to come to any agreement.

And the muzhiks determined to purchase the land individually, according to the ability of each. And the lady agreed to this also.

Pakhom heard that a neighbor had bought twenty desyatins[1] from the lady, and that she had given him a year in which to pay her half of the money. Pakhom was envious.

"They will buy all the land," he said to himself, "and I shall be behind them." He began to reason with his wife.

"The people are buying it up," said he. "We must buy ten desyatins too. Otherwise it will be impossible to live; the overseer was eating us up with fines."

They planned how to buy it. They had laid up a hundred rubles; then they sold a colt and half their bees; and they put their son out as a laborer, and they

[1] Fifty-four acres.

got some more from their brother-in-law; and thus they collected half of the money.

Pakhom gathered up the money, selected fifteen desyatins of land with forest on it, and went to the lady to make the purchase. He negotiated for fifteen desyatins, struck a bargain, and paid down the earnest-money. They went to the city, ratified the purchase; he paid down half of the money; the remainder he bound himself to pay in two years.

And Pakhom now had his land. Pakhom took seed, and sowed the land that he had bought. In a single year he paid up the debt to the lady and to his brother-in-law. And Pakhom became a proprietor.[1] He plowed all his land, and sowed it; he made hay on his own land; he cut stakes on his own land; and on his own land he pastured cattle. Pakhom would ride out over his wide fields to plow, or he would take note of his crops, or gaze at his meadows. And yet he was not happy. The grass seemed to him to be wasted, and the flowers flowering in it seemed entirely different. Formerly he used to ride over this land, — the land as land; but now the land began to be absolutely peculiar.

III

Thus Pakhom lived, and enjoyed himself. Everything would have been good, only the muzhiks began to trespass on his grain and meadows. He begged them to refrain, but they would not stop it. Now the cowboys let the cows into the meadow; now the horses escaped from the night-guard into his corn-field.

And Pakhom drove them out, and forgave it, and never went to law; then he got tired of it, and complained to the volost-court.[2] And though he knew that the muzhiks did it from carelessness, and not from malice, he said to himself: —

"It is impossible to overlook it, otherwise they'll

[1] *Pomyeshchik.*

[2] The *volost* is a district including several villages.

always be pasturing their cattle there. We must teach them a lesson."

He thus taught them in court once; he taught them twice: first one was fined, then another. The muzhiks, Pakhom's neighbors, began to harbor spite against him. Once more they began to trespass, and this time on purpose. Some one got into his woodland by night. They cut down a dozen of his lindens for basts. Pakhom went to his grove, saw what had been done, and turned pale. Some one had been there; the linden branches lay scattered about, the stumps stood out. The whole clump had been cut down to the very last; the rascal had cleaned it all out; only one was left standing.

Pakhom fell into a rage. "Akh!" said he to himself, "if I only knew who did that, I would give him a kneading."

He thought and he thought, "Who could it be?"

"No one more likely," said he to himself, "than Semka."[1]

He went to search through Semka's dvor; he found nothing; they only exchanged some quarrelsome words. And Pakhom felt still more certain that Semyon had done it. He entered a complaint against him. They took it into court and had a long trial. The muzhik was acquitted, for there was no proof against him. Pakhom was still more affronted; he got incensed at the starshina and at the judges.

"You," said he, "are on the side of a pack of thieves. If you were decent men, you would n't acquit thieves."

Pakhom quarreled both with the judges and with his neighbors. They began even to threaten him with the "red rooster."[2] Pakhom had come to live on a broader scale on his farm, but with more constraint in the commune.

And about this time the rumor spread that the people were going to new places. And Pakhom said to himself: —

"There is no reason for *me* to go from my land; but

[1] Semka, diminutive of Semyon, Simeon.

[2] The picturesque Russian metaphor for a conflagration.

if any of our neighbors should go, it would give us more room. I would take their land for myself; I would get it around here: life would be much better, for now it is too confined."

One time Pakhom was sitting at home; a wandering muzhik came along. They let the muzhik have a night's lodging; they gave him something to eat; they entered into conversation with him: —

"Whither, please, is God taking you?"

The muzhik said that he was on his way from down the Volga, where he had been at work. The muzhik related, a word at a time, how the people had gone colonizing there. He related how they had settled there, made a community, and given each *soul* ten desyatins of land. "But the land is such," said he, "that they sowed rye. Such stalks — the horses never saw the like — so thick! five handfuls made a sheaf. One muzhik," said he, "was perfectly poor, — came with his hands alone, — and now he has six horses and two cows."

Pakhom's heart burned within him; he said to himself: "Why remain here in straitened circumstances, when it is possible to live well? I will sell my house and land here; then, with the money I get, I will start anew, and have a complete establishment. But here in these narrow quarters — it's a sin. Only I must find out all about it for myself."

He planned to be gone all summer, and started. From Samara he sailed down the Volga in a steamboat, then he went on foot four hundred versts. He reached the place. It was just so. The muzhiks were living on a generous scale,[1] on farms of ten desyatins each, and they were glad to have accessions to their community. "And any one who has a little money can buy for three rubles as much of the very best land as he wishes, besides his allotment. You can buy just as much as you wish."

Pakhom made a thorough study of it; in the autumn he returned home, and proceeded to sell out everything. He sold his land to advantage, sold his dvor,

[1] *Prostorno*, roomily.

sold all his cattle, withdrew his name from the community, waited till spring, and moved with his family to the new place.

IV

Pakhom came with his family to the new place, and enrolled himself in a large village. He treated the elders to vodka, arranged all the papers. Pakhom was accepted; he was allotted, as for five persons, fifty desyatins[1] of the land, to be located in different fields, besides the pasturage. Pakhom settled down. He got cattle. He had three times as much land as he had had before, and the land was fertile. Life was tenfold better than what it had been in the old time; he had all the arable land and fodder that he needed. He could keep as many cattle as he liked.

At first, while he was getting settled, and putting his house in order, Pakhom was well pleased; but after he began to feel at home, even this farm seemed to him rather narrow quarters.

The first year Pakhom sowed wheat on his allotment; it came up well. He was anxious to sow wheat; but his allotment seemed to him altogether too small for his ambition.

Wheat is sowed there on grass or fallow land. They sow it one year, two years, and let it lie fallow till the feather-grass comes up again. There are many rival claimants for such land and there's not nearly enough to go round.

Quarrels also arose on account of this; one was richer than another: they all wanted to sow, but the poorer ones had to resort to merchants for loans.

Pakhom was desirous of sowing as much as possible. The next year he went to a merchant and hired land for a year. He sowed more; it came up well, but he had to go a long way from the village, not less than fifteen versts. He saw how muzhik-merchants in the vicinity lived in fine houses, and got rich.

[1] One hundred and thirty-five acres.

"That's the thing," said Pakhom to himself. "If only I could buy the land, then I would have a fine house. It would all be in one piece."

And Pakhom began to cogitate how he might get a perpetual title.

Thus Pakhom lived three years. He hired land and sowed more wheat. The years were good, and the wheat grew well, and extra money was laid away.

As life passed, it became every year irksome to Pakhom to buy land with the men, to waste time over it; where the land is pretty good, the muzhiks instantly fly to it and divide it all up. He was always too late to buy cheap, and he had nothing to sow on.

But in the third year, he bought, on shares with a merchant, a pasturage of the muzhiks; and they had already plowed it. The muzhiks had been at law about it, and so the work was lost. "If I owned the land," he thinks, "I should not truckle to any one; and it would not be a sin."

And Pakhom began to inquire where he might buy land in perpetuity. And he struck upon a muzhik. The muzhik had five hundred desyatins[1] for sale; and, as he was anxious to get rid of it, he would sell at a bargain.

Pakhom began to dicker with him. He argued and argued, and finally the muzhik agreed to sell for fifteen hundred rubles, half the money on mortgage. They had already come to an agreement, when a peddler happened along, and asked Pakhom to let him have a little something to eat.

While they were drinking a cup of tea, they entered into conversation.

The peddler related how he was on his way from the distant Bashkirs.

"There," said he, "I bought of the Bashkirs fifteen hundred desyatins of land; and I had to pay only a thousand rubles."

Pakhom began to ask questions. The peddler told his story.

"All I did," said he, "was to satisfy the old men. I

[1] Thirteen hundred and fifty acres.

distributed some khalats and carpets, worth a hundred rubles, besides a chest of tea; and I gave a little wine to those who drank. And I got it for twenty kopeks a desyatin." — He exhibited the title-deed. — "The land," says he, "is by a little river, and the steppe is all covered with grass."

Pakhom went on asking more questions, — How he managed it, and who?

"The land," said the merchant, "you would n't go round it in a year, — it 's all Bashkirian. And the people are as stupid as rams. You could almost get it for nothing."

"Well," said Pakhom to himself, "why should I spend my thousand rubles for five hundred desyatins, and hang a burden of debt around my neck besides? But there, how much I could get for a thousand rubles!"

V

Pakhom asked how he went; and, as soon as he said good-by to the peddler, he determined to go. He left his house in his wife's care, took his man, and started. When they reached the city, he bought a chest of tea, gifts, wine, just as the merchant said. They traveled and traveled; they traveled five hundred versts.[1] On the seventh day they came to the range of the wandering Bashkirs. It was all just as the merchant had said. They all live in the steppe, along a little river, in felt-covered kibitkas. They themselves do not plow and they eat no bread. And their cattle graze along the steppe, and their horses are in droves. Behind the kibitkas the colts are tied, and twice a day they bring the mares to them. They milk the mares, and make kumys out of the milk. The women churn the mares' milk, and make cheese; and all the muzhiks can do is to drink kumys and tea, to eat mutton, and play on their dudkas.[2] All are polite and jolly; they keep festival all summer. The people are very dark, and cannot speak Russian, but are affable.

[1] Three hundred and thirty miles. [2] Reed-pipes.

As soon as the Bashkirs saw Pakhom, they came forth from their kibitkas; they surrounded their guest. The interpreter made his acquaintance. Pakhom told him that he had come to see about land. The Bashkirs were delighted, took him to a fine kibitka, spread rugs down, gave him a down-cushion to sit on, sat round him, and proceeded to treat him to tea and kumys. They slaughtered a ram, and gave him mutton.

Pakhom fetched from his tarantas his gifts, and began to distribute them among the Bashkirs.

Pakhom gave the Bashkirs his gifts, and divided the tea. The Bashkirs were overjoyed. They jabbered and jabbered together, and then commanded the interpreter to speak.

"They bid me tell you," says the interpreter, "that they have taken a fancy to you; and that we have a custom of doing everything possible to gratify a guest, and repay him for his gifts. You have given us gifts. Now tell what you wish from among our possessions, in order that we may give it to you."

"Above all else that you have," says Pakhom, "I would like some of your land. In my country," says he, "there is a scarcity of land. The land is cultivated to death. But you have much land, and good land. I never saw the like."

The interpreter translated for him. The Bashkirs talked and talked. Pakhom could not understand what they were saying; but he saw that they were good-natured, that they were talking at the top of their voices and laughing. Then they relapsed into silence, looked at Pakhom; and the interpreter said: —

"They bid me tell you that, in return for your kindness, they are happy to give you as much land as you wish. Only show us your hand — it shall be yours."

They were still talking, and began to dispute angrily. And Pakhom asked what they were quarreling about.

And the interpreter replied: —

"Some say that they ought to ask the head man about the land, and that without his consent it is impossible. And others say that it can be done without the head man."

VI

The Bashkirs were quarreling; suddenly a man came in a foxskin shapka.

They grew silent, and all stood up. And the interpreter said: —

"This is the head man himself."

Instantly Pakhom got out his best khalat, and gave it to the head man, together with five pounds of tea.

The head man accepted it, and sat down in the chief place. And immediately the Bashkirs began to tell him all about it.

The head man listened and listened; nodded his head, in sign of silence for all, and began to speak to Pakhom in Russian.

"Well," said he, "it can be done. Take it wherever you please. There is plenty of land."

"I shall get as much as I want," said Pakhom to himself. "I must secure it immediately, else they 'll say it 's mine, and then take it away."

"I thank you," says he, "for your kind words. I have seen that you have much land, and I need not very much. Only you must let me know what shall be mine. As soon as possible you must have it measured off and secured to me. God disposes of life and death. You good people make the grant, but the time may come when your children will take it away."

"You are right," says the head man; "it must be secured to you."

Pakhom began to speak: —

"I have heard that a merchant was here with you. You also gave him land, and struck a bargain. I should like to do the same."

The head man understood perfectly.

"This can all be done," says he. "We have a clerk; and we will go to the city, and will all put on our seals."

"And the price will be how much?" asked Pakhom.

"We have one price: one thousand rubles a day."

Pakhom did not understand. "What is this measure, the day? How many desyatins are there in it?"

"We can't reckon it," says he. "But we sell it by the day: all that you can go round in a day — that is yours; and the price of a day is one thousand rubles."

Pakhom was astonished.

"Look here," said he. "What I can go round in a day is a good deal of land!"

The head man laughed.

"It's all yours," said he. "Only one stipulation: if you don't come back within the day to the place from which you started, your money is lost."

"But how," says Pakhom, "can I mark where I am going?"

"Well, we'll stand on the place where it pleases you; we will be standing there; and you shall go and draw the circle, and take with you a hoe, and make a mark wherever you please; at the angle dig a little hole, put some turf in it; and we will go over it, from hole to hole, with the plow. Make your circle as large as you like, only at sunset you must be back at that place from which you set out. All that you encircle is yours."

Pakhom was delighted. They agreed to go out early. They talked it over, drank still more kumys, ate the mutton, and drank some more tea. It approached night-fall. They arranged for Pakhom to sleep in a down-bed, and the Bashkirs went off. They agreed to come together at early dawn the next day, and to go out at sunrise.

VII

Pakhom lay in his down-bed; and there he could not sleep, all on account of thinking of his land.

"I will get hold of a great tract," said he to himself. "I can go over fifty versts in one day. A day now is worth a year. There'll be a good bit of land in a circle of fifty versts. I will sell off the worst parts, or let it to the muzhiks; and I will pick out what I like, and I will settle on it. I will have a two-ox plow, and I will take

two men as laborers. I will cultivate fifty desyatins, and I will pasture my cattle on the rest."

Pakhom did not get a wink of sleep all night. Just before dawn he dropped into a doze. He just dropped into a doze and had a dream. He seemed to see himself lying in this very same kibitka, and listening to somebody cackling outside. And it seemed to him that he wanted to see who was laughing; and he got up and went out of the kibitka, and lo! that very same head man of the Bashkirs was sitting in front of the kibitka, and was holding his sides, and roaring and cackling about something.

He went up to him and asked:—

"What are you laughing at?"

And then it seemed to him that it was no longer the head man of the Bashkirs, but the peddler who had come to him and told him about the land.

And as soon as he saw that it was the peddler, he asked:—

"Have you been here long?"

And then it was no longer the peddler, but that muzhik who had come down the Volga so long ago.

And Pakhom saw that it was not the muzhik either, but the Devil himself, with horns and hoofs, sitting and laughing; and before him was lying a man barefooted, in shirt and drawers. And Pakhom looked more attentively to find out who the man was.

And he saw that the dead man was none other than — himself! Pakhom was frightened, and woke up.

He woke up.

"What was I dreaming about?" he asked himself. He looked around, he peered out of the closed door: it was already getting light, day was beginning to dawn.

"The people must be getting up," he thinks; "it's time to start."

Pakhom arose, aroused his man in the tarantas, told him to harness up, and then went to arouse the Bashkirs.

"Time," says he, "to go out on the steppe, to measure it off."

The Bashkirs got up, all collected; and the head man came forth. The Bashkirs again began by drinking kumys; they wished Pakhom to treat them to tea, but he was not inclined to delay.

"If we go .... it is time to go now," said he.

VIII

The Bashkirs made ready; some got on horseback, some climbed into carts; they started. And Pakhom rode with his man in their tarantas, and took with him a hoe. They rode out into the steppe; the dawn was beginning. They reached a mound — *shikhan* in Bashkirian. They descended from their carts, dismounted from their horses, collected in a crowd. The chief man came to Pakhom, and pointed with his hand.

"Here," says he, "all is ours, as far as you can see. Take what you desire."

Pakhom's eyes burned. The whole region was grassy, flat as the palm of your hand, black as a pot; and where there was a hollow, it was filled with grass as high as one's breast.

The chief man took off his foxskin cap, and laid it on the ground.

"Here," says he, "is the spot. Start from here, come back here. All that you go round shall be yours."

Pakhom took out his money, laid it in the cap; took off his kaftan, stood in his blouse[1] alone; girded himself around the belly with his sash, pulled it tighter; hung round his neck a little bag with bread, put a little flask with water into his belt, tightened his leg-wrappers, took the hoe from his man, and got ready to start.

He pondered and pondered on which side to take it; it was good everywhere.

He said to himself: —

"It 's all one; I will go toward the sunrise."

[1] *Poddyovka*, a sort of half kaftan.

He faced toward the east and paced back and forth, waiting till the sun should show above the horizon.

He said to himself, "I will not lose any time. It's cool, and easier to walk."

As soon as the sunlight gushed out over the horizon, he threw his hoe over his shoulder, and started out on the steppe.

Pakhom proceeded neither slow nor fast. He went about a verst;[1] he halted and he dug a little pit and piled the turf in it, so that it might attract attention.

He went farther. As he went on, he quickened his pace. As he kept going on, he dug other little pits.

Pakhom looked around. The shikhan was still in sight in the sun, and the people were standing on it; the tires on the tarantas wheels glistened. Pakhom conjectured that he has been five versts. He began to get warm; he took off his blouse, threw it over his shoulder, and went on. It grew hot. He looked at the sun.[2] It was already breakfast-time.

"One stage over," thinks Pakhom, "and four of them make a day; it's too early as yet to turn round. Only let me take off my boots."

He sat down and took off his boots, put them in his belt, and went on. It was easy walking. He said to himself, "Let me go five versts farther, then I will swing round to the left. This place is very good; it's a pity to give it up."

The farther he went, the better it became. He still went straight ahead. He looked round — the shikhan was now scarcely visible; and the people, like little ants, made a black spot on it; and something barely glistened.

"Well," said Pakhom, "I have enough in this direction; I must be turning round. I am sweaty enough. I should like a drink."

He halted, dug a pit, filled it with turf, unfastened his flask, took a drink, and turned sharply to the left. He went and went — the grass was deep, and it was hot.

[1] Thirty-five hundred feet.

[2] Russian, *solnuishko*, little sun.

Pakhom began to feel weary; he looked at the sun and saw that it was dinner-time.

"Well," said he, "I must have a rest."

Pakhom halted. He sat down and ate his bread and water, but did not try to lie down. He said to himself: —

"If I lie down, I may fall asleep."

He sat a little while; then he started on again; he found it easy walking; his strength was renewed by his meal, but now it was growing very hot — yes, and the sun began to decline; but still he kept going. He said: —

"Endure it for an hour, and you have an age to live."

He still went on a long distance in this direction. He kept intending to turn to the left, but lo! it was a low land and a moist soil. It was a pity to throw it away! He said to himself: —

"This day has been a good one."

He still continued straight on. He took in the low land — dug his pit on the farther side of the low land, the hollow, and then turned the second corner.

Pakhom gazed back in the direction of the shikhan. The heat had caused a haziness, there was a quivering in the atmosphere, and through the haziness the people on the shikhan could scarcely be seen.

"Well," said Pakhom, "I have taken long sides — I must make this one shorter."

He started on the third side — he tried to hasten his pace. He looked at the sun — it was already far down the west, and on the third side he had only gone two versts; and back to the starting-point, there were fifteen versts.

"No," he said, "even though the tract should be uneven I must hurry back in a straight line. It would n't do to take too much; even as it is, I have already a good deal of land."

Pakhom dug his little pit in all haste, and headed straight for the shikhan.

IX

Pakhom went straight toward the shikhan, and now it began to be heavy work for him. He was bathed in sweat; and his bare legs were cut and torn, and began to fail under him. He felt a desire to rest, but it was impossible; he could not stop till sunset. The sun did not delay, but was sinking lower and lower.

"Akh!" he says to himself, "can I have made a blunder? can I have taken too much? why don't you hurry along faster?"

He gazed at the shikhan — it gleamed in the sun; it was still a long distance to the place, and the sun was now not far from the horizon.

Still Pakhom hurried on; it was hard for him, but he kept quickening his pace, quickening his pace. He walked and walked — it was still always far away. He took to the double-quick. He threw away his blouse, his boots, his flask. He threw away his cap, but he clung to his hoe and helped himself along with it.

"Akh!" he said to himself, "I was too greedy; I have ruined the whole business; I shall not get there before sunset."

And his breath began to fail him all the worse because of his apprehension. Pakhom ran — his shirt and drawers clung to his body by reason of sweat — his mouth was parched. In his breast a pair of blacksmith's bellows, as it were, were working; and in his heart a mill was beating; and his legs were almost breaking down under him.

It became painful for Pakhom. He said to himself: —

"Suppose I should die from the strain?"

He was afraid of dropping dead, and yet he could not stop.

"If after running, I were to stop now, they would call me a fool."

He ran and ran. He was now getting near, and he could hear the Bashkirs shouting — screaming at him; and their screams made his heart pain him more than ever.

Pakhom ran on with the last of his strength, and the sun was still hovering on the horizon's edge; it went into

the haze; there was a great glow, red as blood. Now — now it was setting! The sun had nearly set, but now Pakhom was not far from the place. He could see it; and the people on the shikhan gesticulating to him, urging him on. He saw the foxskin cap on the ground, he could even see the money in it. And he saw the head man sitting on the ground, holding his belly with his hands. And Pakhom remembered his dream.

"Much land," he said to himself, "but perhaps God has not willed me to live on it. Okh! I have ruined myself," he thinks. "I shall not get it."

Pakhom looked at the sun, but the sun had gone down under the earth; its body was already hidden, and its last segment had disappeared under the horizon.

Pakhom exerted his last energies, threw himself forward with his body; his legs just kept him from falling.

Just as Pakhom reached the shikhan, it suddenly grew dark. He saw that the sun had gone. Pakhom groaned.

"I have lost my labor," thinks he. He was just about to stop; but as he still heard the Bashkirs all screaming, he remembered that he was below them, and therefore the sun seemed to have set, although it had not set to those on top of the shikhan. Pakhom took a breath and ran up the shikhan. It was still light on the mound. Pakhom ran, and there was the cap. In front of the cap sat the head man, laughing and holding his sides.

Pakhom remembered his dream, groaned "Akh!" his legs gave way under him, and he fell forward, reaching out his arms toward the cap.

"Aï! brave lad!" shouted the head man. "You have got a good piece of land."

Pakhom's man ran to him, attempted to help him to his feet; but from his mouth poured a stream of blood, and he lay dead.

The Bashkirs clucked with their tongues, expressing their sorrow.

Pakhom's man took the hoe, dug a grave for him, made it just long enough, from head to foot, — three arshins,[1] — and buried him.

[1] About seven feet.

THE GODSON

CHAPTER I

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." — MATT. v. 38, 39.
"Vengeance is mine; I will repay." — ROM. xii. 19.

A SON was born to a poor muzhik. The muzhik was glad; went to invite a neighbor to be his godfather. The neighbor declined. People are not eager to stand as godparents to a poor muzhik. The poor muzhik went to another; this one also declined.

He went through all the village: no one was willing to stand as godfather. The muzhik went to the next village. And a passer-by happened to meet him as he was going. The passer-by stopped.

"Good-morning," said he, "little muzhik,[1] whither doth God lead you?"

"The Lord," says the muzhik, "has given me a little child, as a care during infancy, as a consolation for old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. But, because I am poor, no one in our village will stand as godfather. I am trying to find a godfather."

And the passer-by said: —

"Take me for his godfather."

The muzhik was glad, thanked the passer-by, and said: —

"Whom now can I get for godmother?"

"Well, for godmother," said the passer-by, "invite the storekeeper's daughter. Go into town; on the mar-

[1] *Muzhichok.*

ket-place is a stone house with shops; as you go into the house, ask the merchant to let his daughter be godmother."

The muzhik had some misgivings.

"How, godfather elect," says he, "can I go to a merchant, a rich man? He will scorn me; he won't let his daughter go."

"That's not for you to worry about. Go ask him. Be ready to-morrow morning. I will come to the christening."

The poor muzhik returned home; went to the city, to the merchant's. He reined up his horse in the dvor. The merchant himself came out.

"What is needed?" he asked.

"Look here, Mr. Merchant.[1] The Lord has given me a little child, as a care during infancy, as a consolation for old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. Pray, let your daughter be his godmother."

"But when is the christening?"

"To-morrow morning."

"Well; very good. God be with you! she shall come to-morrow to the mass."

On the next day the godmother came; the godfather also came; they christened the child. As soon as they had christened the child, the godfather went off, and they knew not who he was. And they did not see him from that time forth.

CHAPTER II

The lad began to grow, to the delight of his parents; and he was strong and industrious, and intelligent and gentle. He reached the age of ten. His parents had him taught to read and write. What others took five years to learn, this lad learned in one year. And there was nothing left for him to learn.

Holy Week came. The lad went to his godmother,

[1] *Da vot gospodin kupyets.*

gave her the usual Easter salutation,[1] returned home, and asked: —

"Batyushka and matushka,[2] where does my godfather live? I should like to go to him, to give him Easter greetings."

And the father said to him: —

"We know not, my dear little son, where thy godfather lives. We ourselves are sorry about it. We have not seen him since the day when he was at thy christening. And we have not heard of him, and we know not where he lives; we know not whether he is alive."

The son bowed low to his father, to his mother: —

"Let me go, batyushka and matushka, and find my godfather. I wish to go to him and exchange Easter greetings."

The father and the mother let their son go. And the boy set forth to find his godfather.

CHAPTER III

The lad set forth from home, and walked along the highway. He walked half a day; a passer-by met him. The passer-by halted.

"Good-afternoon, lad," said he; "whither does God lead thee?"

And the boy replied, "I went," says he, "to my dear godmother,[3] to give her Easter greetings. I went back home. I asked my parents where my godfather lived; I wished to exchange Easter greetings with him. My parents said, 'We know not, little son, where thy godfather lives. From the day when he was at thy christening, he has been gone from us; and we know nothing about him, and we know not whether he is alive.' And I had a desire to see my godfather, and so I am on my way to find him."

[1] A kiss with the words, *Khristos voskres.* This custom is universal among the peasantry. The person saluted replies, *Vostinu voskres* — Risen indeed.

[2] Little father and mother.

[3] *Matushka krestnaya.*

And the passer-by said: —

"I am thy godfather."

The lad was delighted and exchanged Easter greetings with his godfather.

"And where," said he, "dear godfather,[1] art thou preparing to go now? If in our direction, then come to our house; but if to thy own house, then I will go with thee."

And the godfather said: —

"I have not time now to go to thy house; I have business in the villages. But I shall be at home tomorrow. Then come to me."

"But how, batyushka, shall I get to thee?"

"Well, then, go always toward the sunrise, always straight ahead. Thou wilt reach a forest; thou wilt see in the midst of the forest a clearing. Sit down in this clearing, rest, and notice what there may be there. Thou wilt come through the forest; thou wilt see a park, and in the park a palace with a golden roof. That is my house. Go up to the gates. I myself will meet thee there."

Thus said the godfather, and disappeared from his godson's eyes.

CHAPTER IV

The lad went as his godfather had bidden him. He went and he went; he reached the forest. He walked into the clearing, and sees in the midst of the meadow a pine tree, and on the pine tree a rope fastened to a branch, and on the rope an oaken log weighing three puds.[2] And under the log was a trough with honey.

While the boy was pondering why the honey was put there, and why the log was hung, he heard a crackling in the forest, and he saw some bears coming, — a she-bear in advance, behind her a yearling, and then three young cubs. The she-bear stretched out her nose, and marched straight for the trough, and

[1] *Batyushka krestnui.* [2] 108.33 pounds.

the young bears after her. The she-bear thrust her snout into the honey. She called her cubs: the cubs gamboled up to her, pressed up to the trough. The log swung off a little, came back, jostled the cubs. The she-bear saw it, and pushed the log with her paw. The log swung off a little farther, again came back, struck in the midst of the cubs, one on the back, one on the head.

The cubs began to whine, and jumped away. The she-bear growled, clutched the log with both paws above her head, pushed it away from her. The log flew high. The yearling bounded up to the trough, thrust his snout into the honey, and began to munch; and the others to come up again. They had not time to get there before the log returned, struck the yearling in the head, and killed him with the blow.

The she-bear growled more fiercely than before, clutched the log, and pushed it up with all her might. The log flew higher than the branch; even the rope slackened. The she-bear went to the trough, and all the cubs behind her. The log flew, flew up; stopped, fell back. The lower it falls, the swifter it falls. It goes very swiftly; it flew back toward the she-bear. It struck her a tremendous blow on the pate. The she-bear rolled over, stretched out her legs, and breathed her last. The cubs ran away.

CHAPTER V

The lad was amazed, and went farther. He came to a great park, and in the park was a lofty palace with a golden roof. And at the gate stood the godfather, smiling. The godfather greeted his godson, led him through the gate, and brought him into the park. Never even in dreams had the lad dreamed of such beauty and bliss as there were in that park.

The godfather led the lad into the palace. The palace was still better. The godfather led the lad through all the apartments. Each was better than the

other, each more festive than the other; and he led him to a sealed door.

"Seest thou this door?" said he. "There is no key to it, only a seal. It can be opened, but I forbid thee. Live and roam wherever thou pleasest, and as thou pleasest. Enjoy all these pleasures; only one thing is forbidden thee. Enter not this door. But, if thou shouldst enter, then remember what thou sawest in the forest."

The godfather said this, and went. The godson was left alone, and began to live. And it was so festive and joyful, that it seemed to him that he had lived there only three hours, whereas he lived there thirty years.

And after thirty years had passed, the godson came to the sealed door, and began to ponder.

"Why did my godfather forbid me to go into this chamber? Let me go and see what is there."

He gave the door a push; the seals fell off; the door opened. The godson entered, and saw an apartment, larger than the rest, and finer than the rest; and in the midst of the apartment stood a golden throne.

The godson walked, walked through the apartment, and came to the throne, mounted the steps, and sat down. He sat down, and he saw a scepter lying by the throne.

The godson took the scepter into his hands. As soon as he took the scepter into his hands, instantly all the four walls of the apartment fell away. The godson gazed around him, and saw the whole world, and all that men were doing in the world.

He looked straight ahead: he saw the sea, and ships sailing on it. He looked toward the right: he saw foreign, non-Christian nations living. He looked toward the left side: there lived Christians, but not Russians. He looked toward the fourth side: there live our Russians.

"Now," said he, "I will look, and see what is doing at home — if the grain is growing well."

He looked toward his own field, and saw the sheaves

standing. He began to count the sheaves [to see] whether there would be much grain; and he saw a telyega driving into the field, and a muzhik sitting in it.

The godson thought that it was his sire come by night to gather his sheaves. He looked; it was the thief, Vasili Kudriashof, coming. He went to the sheaves and began to lay hands upon them. The godson was provoked. He cried:—

"Batyushka, they are stealing sheaves in the field!"

His father woke in the night.

"I dreamed," said he, "that they were stealing sheaves. I am going to see."

He mounted his horse and rode off.

He came to the field; he saw Vasili; he shouted to the muzhiks. Vasili was beaten. They took him and carried him off to jail.

The godson looked at the city where his godmother used to live. He saw that she was married to a merchant. And she was in bed, asleep; but her husband was up; he had gone to his mistress. The godson shouted to the merchant's wife:—

"Get up! thy husband is engaged in bad business."

The godmother jumped out of bed, dressed herself, found where her husband was, upbraided him, beat the mistress, and refused to have anything more to do with her husband.

Once more the godson looked toward his mother, and saw that she was lying down in the izba, and a robber was sneaking in, and beginning to break open the chests.

His mother awoke, and screamed. The robber noticed it, seized an ax, brandished it over the mother, and was about to kill her.

The godson could not restrain himself but let fly the scepter at the robber, struck him straight in the temple, and killed him on the spot.

CHAPTER VI

The instant the godson killed the robber, the walls closed again, the apartment became what it was.

The door opened, the godfather entered. The godfather came to his son, took him by the hand, drew him from the throne, and said: —

"Thou hast not obeyed my command: one evil deed thou hast done, — thou openedst the sealed door; a second evil deed thou hast done, — thou hast mounted the throne, and taken my scepter into thy hand; a third evil deed thou hast done, — thou hast added much to the wickedness in the world. If thou hadst sat there an hour longer, thou wouldst have ruined half of the people."

And again the godfather led his son to the throne, and took the scepter in his hands. And again the walls were removed, and all things became visible.

And the godfather said: —

"Look now at what thou hast done to thy father. Vasili has now been in jail a year; he has learned all the evil that there is; he has become perfectly desperate. Look! now he has stolen two of thy father's horses, and thou seest how he has set fire to the dvor. This is what thou hast done to thy father."

As soon as the godson saw that his father's house was on fire, his godfather shut it from him, commanded him to look in the other direction.

"Here," says he, "it has been a year since thy godmother's husband deserted his wife; he gads about with others, all astray; and she, out of grief, has taken to drink; and his former mistress has gone wholly to the bad. This is what thou hast done to thy godmother."

The godfather also hid this, and pointed to his house. And he saw his mother: she was weeping over her sins; she repented, saying: —

"Better had it been for the robber to have killed me, for then I should not have fallen into such sins."

"This is what thou hast done to thy mother."

The godfather hid this also, and pointed down. And the godson saw the robber; two guards were holding the robber before the dungeon.

And the godfather said: —

"This man had taken nine lives. He ought himself to have atoned for his sins. But thou hast killed him: thou hast taken all his sins upon thyself. This is what thou hast done unto thyself. The she-bear pushed the log once, it disturbed her cubs; she pushed it a second time, it killed her yearling; but the third time that she pushed it, it killed herself. So has it been with thee. I give thee now thirty years' grace. Go out into the world, atone for the robber's sins. If thou dost not atone for them, thou must go in his place."

And the godson asked: —

"How shall I atone for his sins?"

And the godfather said: —

"When thou hast undone as much evil as thou hast done in the world, then thou wilt have atoned for thy sins, and the sins of the robber."

And the godson asked: —

"How undo the evil that is in the world?"

The godfather said: —

"Go straight toward the sunrise. Thou wilt reach a field, men in it. Notice what the men are doing, and teach them what thou knowest. Then go farther, notice what thou seest: thou wilt come on the fourth day to a forest; in the forest is a cell, in the cell lives a hermit; tell him all that has taken place. He will instruct thee. When thou hast done all that the hermit commands thee, then thou wilt have atoned for thy sins, and the sins of the robber."

Thus spoke the godfather, and let the godson out of the gate.

CHAPTER VII

The godson went on his way. As he walked he said to himself: —

"How can I undo the evil that is in the world? Is

evil destroyed in the world by banishing men into banishment, by putting them in prison, by executing them? How can I go to work to destroy evil, to say nothing of taking on one the sins of others?"

The godson thought and thought, but could not think it out. He went and went; he came to a field. In the field the grain had come up good and thick, and it was harvest-time. The godson saw that a little heifer had strayed into this grain, and the men had mounted their horses, and were hunting the little heifer through the grain, from one side to the other. Just as soon as the little heifer tried to escape from the grain, some one would ride up and frighten the little heifer back into the grain again. And again they would gallop after it through the grain. And on one side stood a peasant woman, weeping.

"They are running my little heifer," she said.

And the godson began to ask the muzhiks: —

"Why do you so? All of you ride out of the grain! Let the woman[1] herself call out the heifer."

The men obeyed. The woman went to the edge, began to call, "Co', boss, co', boss."[2]

The little heifer pricked up her ears, listened, listened; ran to her mistress, thrust her nose under her skirt, almost knocked her off her legs. And the muzhiks were glad, and the peasant woman was glad, and the little heifer was glad.

The godson went farther, and said to himself: —

"Now I see that evil is increased by evil. The more men chase evil, the more evil they make. It is impossible, of course, to destroy evil by evil. But how destroy it? I know not. It was good, the way the little heifer listened to its mistress. But suppose it had n't listened, how would they have got it out?"

The godson pondered, could think of nothing, and so went on his way.

[1] *Khozyaïka.*

[2] *Tpriusi, tpriusi, buryonotchka, tpriusi, tpriusi!* *Buryonotchka* is the diminutive of a word meaning nut-brown cow.

CHAPTER VIII

He went and went. He came to a village. He asked for a night's lodging at the last izba. The woman of the house[1] consented. There was no one in the izba except the woman, who was washing up.

The godson went in, climbed on top of the oven, and began to watch what the woman was doing; he saw that she was scrubbing the izba; she began to rub the table, she scrubbed the table; she proceeded to wipe it with a dirty towel. She was ready to wipe off one side — but the table was not cleaned. Streaks of dirt were left on the table from the dirty towel. She was ready to wipe it on the other side; while she rubbed out some streaks, she made others. She began again to rub it from end to end. Again the same thing. She daubed it with the dirty towel. She destroyed one spot, but she made another. The godson watched and watched; and he said: —

"What are you doing, little mistress?"

"Why, dost not see?" she asked. "I am cleaning up for Easter. But here, I can't clean my table; it's all dirty. I'm all spent."

"If you would rinse out your towel," said he, "then you could wipe it off."

The woman did so; she quickly cleaned off the table.

"Thank thee," says she, "for telling me how."

In the morning the godson bade good-by to the woman of the house and started on his way. He went and he went and he came to a forest. He saw muzhiks bending hoops. The godson came up, saw the muzhiks; but the hoop would not stay bent.

The godson looked and noticed that the muzhiks' block was loose. There was no support in it. The godson looked on, and said: —

"What are you doing, brothers?"

"We are bending hoops; and twice we have steamed them: we are all spent; they will not bend."

[1] *Khozyaïka.*

"Well, now, brothers, just fasten your block; then you will make it stay bent."

The muzhiks heeded what he said, fastened the block, and their work went in tune.

The godson spent the night with them and then went on his way. All day and all night he walked; just before dawn he met some drovers. He lay down near them, and he noticed the drovers had halted their cattle, and were struggling with a fire. They had taken dry twigs and lighted them, but they did not allow them to get well started, but piled the fire with wet brushwood. The brushwood began to hiss; the fire went out. The drovers took more dry stuff, kindled it, again piled on the wet brushwood. Again it went out. They struggled long, but could not kindle the fire.

And the godson said: —

"Don't be in such haste to put on the brushwood, but first start a nice little fire. When it burns up briskly, then pile on."

Thus the drovers did. They started a powerful fire, and laid on the brushwood. The brushwood caught, the pile burned. The godson stayed a little while with them, and went farther, and he pondered and pondered, but could not tell for what purpose he had seen these three things.

CHAPTER IX

The godson went and went. A day went by. He came to a forest; in the forest was a cell. The godson went to the cell and knocked. A voice from the cell asked: —

"Who is there?"

"A great sinner; I come to atone for the sins of another."

The hermit came forth, and asked: —

"What are these sins that thou bearest for another?"

The godson told him all, — about his godfather, and about the she-bear and her cubs, and about the throne

in the sealed apartment, and about his godfather's prohibition; and how he had seen the muzhiks in the field, how they trampled down all the grain, and how the little heifer came of her own accord to her mistress.

"I understood," says he, "that it is impossible to destroy evil by evil; but I cannot understand how to destroy it. Teach me."

And the hermit said: —

"But tell me what more thou hast seen on thy way."

The godson told him about the peasant woman, — how she scrubbed; and about the muzhiks, — how they made hoops; and about the herdsmen, — how they lighted the fire.

The hermit listened, returned to his cell, brought out a dull hatchet.

"Come with me," says he.

The hermit went to a clearing away from the cell, and pointed to a tree.

"Cut it down," said he.

The godson cut it down; the tree fell.

"Now cut it into three lengths."

The godson cut it into three lengths. The hermit returned to the cell again and brought some fire.

"Now," said he, "burn these three logs."

The godson made a fire, burned the three logs. There remained three firebrands.

"Half bury them in the earth. This way."

The godson buried them.

"Thou seest the river at the foot of the mountain? Bring hither water in thy mouth, water them. Water this firebrand just as thou didst teach the baba; water this one as thou didst instruct the hoop-makers; and water this one as thou didst instruct the herdsmen. When all three shall have sprouted, and three apple trees sprung from the firebrands, then wilt thou know how evil is destroyed in men; then thou shalt atone for thy sins."

The hermit said this, and returned to his cell.

The godson pondered and pondered; but he could

not comprehend the meaning of what the hermit had said. But he decided to do what he had commanded him.

CHAPTER X

The godson went to the river, "took prisoner" a mouthful of water, poured it on the firebrand. He went again and again. He also watered the other two. The godson grew weary and wanted something to eat. He went to the hermit's cell to ask for food. He opened the door, and the hermit was lying dead on a bench. The godson looked round and found some biscuits, and ate them. He found also a spade, and began to dig a grave for the hermit. At night he brought water, watered the brands, and by day he dug the grave. As soon as he had dug the grave, he was anxious to bury the hermit; people came from the village, bringing food for the hermit.

The people learned how the hermit had died, and had ordained the godson to take his place. The people helped bury the hermit, they left bread for the godson, they promised to bring more, and departed.

And the godson remained to live in the hermit's place, and the godson lived there, subsisting on what people brought him, and he fulfilled what was told him, — bringing water in his mouth from the river, and watering the brands.

Thus lived the godson for a year, and many people began to come to him. The fame of him went forth, that there was living in the forest a holy man, that he was working out his salvation by bringing water in his mouth from the river at the foot of the mountain, that he was watering the burned stumps. Many people began to come to him. And rich merchants began to come, bringing him gifts. The godson took nothing for himself, save what was necessary; but whatever was given him, he distributed among other poor people.

And thus the godson continued to live: half of the

day he brought water in his mouth and watered the brands; and the other half he rested, and received the people.

And the godson began to think that this was the way he had been commanded to live, and that thus he would destroy sin, and atone for his sins.

Thus the godson lived a second year, and he never let a single day pass without putting on water; but as yet not a single brand had sprouted.

One time as he was sitting in his cell he heard a man riding past on horseback, and singing songs. The godson went out to see what kind of a man it was. He saw a strong young man. His clothes were good, and his horse and the saddle on which he sat were rich.

The godson stopped him, and asked who he was, and where he was going.

The man halted.

"I am a robber," said he. "I ride along the highways, I kill men; the more men I kill, the gayer songs I sing."

The godson was horror-struck, and he asked himself: —

"How destroy the evil in this man? It is good for me to speak to those who come to me, for they are repentant. But this man boasts of his wickedness."

The godson said nothing, but, as he started to go off, he thought: —

"Now, how to act? If this cutthroat gets into the habit of riding by this way, he will frighten everybody; people will cease coming to me. And there will be no advantage to them, — yes, and then how shall I live?"

And the godson stopped. And he spoke to the highwayman.

"People come to me here," said he, "not to boast of their wickedness, but to repent, and put their sins away through prayer. Repent thou also, if thou fearest God; but if thou dost not desire to repent, then get thee hence, and never return, trouble me not, and frighten not the people from coming to me. And if thou dost not obey, God will punish thee."

The cutthroat jeered: —

"I am not afraid of God," said he, "nor will I obey you. You are not my master.[1] You get your living by your piety," said he, "and I get my living by robbery. We must all get a living. Teach the peasant women that come to thee, but read me no lecture. And as for what you say about God, to-morrow I will kill two men more than usual. And I would kill you to-day, but I do not wish to soil my hands. But henceforth don't come into my way."

This threat the cutthroat uttered and rode off. But he came by no more, and the godson lived in his former style comfortably for eight years.

CHAPTER XI

One time — it was at night — the godson went out to water his brands; he returned to his cell to rest, and he sat looking up and down the road, if any people should soon be coming. And on that day not a soul came. The godson sat alone by his door until evening; and it seemed lonely, and he began to think about his life. He remembered how the cutthroat had reproached him for getting his living by his piety, and the godson reviewed his life.

"I am not living," he said to himself, "as the hermit commanded me to live. The hermit imposed a penance on me, and I am getting from it bread and reputation among the people; and so led away have I been by it, that I am lonely when people do not come to me. And when the people come, then my only joy consists in the fact that they praise my holiness. It is not right to live so. I have been seduced by my popularity among the people. I have not atoned for my former sins, but I have incurred fresh ones. I will go into the forest, to another place, so that the people may not come to me. I will live alone, so as to atone for my former sins, and not incur new ones."

Thus reasoned the godson; and he took a little bag

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

of biscuits and his spade, and went away from the cell into a ravine, so as to dig for himself a hut in a gloomy place, to hide from the people.

The godson was walking along with his little bag and his spade when the cutthroat overtook him. The godson was frightened, tried to run, but the cutthroat caught up with him.

"Where are you going?" said he.

The godson told him that he wanted to go away from people, to a place where no one would find him.

The cutthroat marveled.

"How will you live now, when people no longer will come to you?"

The godson had not thought of this before; but when the cutthroat asked him, he began to think about his sustenance.

"On what God will give," said he.

The highwayman said nothing, but rode on.

"Why was it," said the godson to himself, "that I said nothing to him about his life? Perhaps now he is repentant. To-day he seemed more subdued, and did not threaten to kill me."

And the godson shouted to the cutthroat: —

"But still it is needful for thee to repent. Thou wilt not escape from God."

The cutthroat wheeled his horse around, and, drawing a knife from his belt, shook it at the godson. The godson was frightened; he ran into the forest.

The cutthroat did not attempt to follow him, but only shouted: —

"Twice I have let you off; fall not in my hands a third time, else I will kill you!"

He said this, and rode off.

The godson went at eventide to water his brands; behold! one had put forth sprouts, an apple tree was growing from it.

CHAPTER XII

The godson hid from the people, and began to live alone. His biscuits were used up.

"Well," he said to himself, "now I will seek for roots."

But, as he began his search, he saw, hanging on a bough, a little bag of biscuits. The godson took it, and began to eat.

As soon as his biscuits were gone, again another little bag came, on the same branch. And thus the godson lived. He had only one grievance: he was afraid of the cutthroat. As soon as he heard the cutthroat, he would hide himself; he would think: —

"He will kill me, and I shall not have time to atone for my sins."

Thus he lived for ten years more. One apple tree grew, and thus there remained two firebrands as firebrands.

Once the godson arose betimes and proceeded to fulfil his task; he soaked the earth around the firebrands, but he became weary, and sat down to rest.

He sat down, and while he was resting he said to himself: —

"I have done wrong because I have been afraid of death. If it please God, I may thus atone even by death for my sins."

Even while these thoughts were passing through his mind, suddenly he heard the cutthroat coming; he was cursing.

The godson listened, and he said: —

"Without God, no evil and no good can come to me from any one."

And he went out to meet the cutthroat. He saw that the cutthroat was not riding alone, but had a man behind him on the saddle. And the man's hands and mouth were tied up. The man was silent, but the cutthroat was railing at him.

The godson went out to the cutthroat, and stood in front of the horse.

"Where," said he, "art thou taking this man?"

"I am taking him into the forest. This is a merchant's son. He will not tell where his father's money is hidden. I am going to thrash him until he will tell."

And the cutthroat started to ride on. But the godson would not allow it; he seized the horse by the bridle.

"Let this man go," said he.

The cutthroat was wroth with the godson and threatened him.

"Do you desire this?" he exclaimed. "I promise you I will kill you. Out of the way!"

The godson was not intimidated.

"I will not get out of thy way," said he. "I fear thee not. I fear God only. And God bids me not let thee go. Unloose the man."

The cutthroat scowled, drew out his knife, cut the cords, let the merchant's son go free.

"Off with you," says he, "both of you! and don't cross my path a second time."

The merchant's son jumped down and made off, and the cutthroat started to ride on, but the godson still detained him. He began to urge him to reform his evil life. The cutthroat stood still, heard every word; but he made no reply, and rode off.

The next morning the godson went to water his firebrands. Behold! the second one had sprouted — another apple tree was growing.

CHAPTER XIII

Ten years more passed.

One time the godson was sitting down, he had no desires and he had no fear, and his heart was glad within him. And he said to himself:

"What blessings men receive from God! but they torment themselves in vain. They ought to live and enjoy their lives."

And he remembered all the wickedness of men — how they torment themselves. And he felt sorry for them.

"Here I am," he said to himself, "living idly. I must go out and tell people what I know."

Even while he was pondering, he heard the cutthroat coming. He was about to let him pass; for he thought:—

"Whatever I say to him, he will not accept."

This was his first thought; but then he reconsidered it, and went out on the road. The cutthroat was riding by in moody silence; his eyes were on the ground.

The godson gazed at him, and he felt sorry for him; he drew near to him and seized him by the knee.

"Dear brother," said he, "have pity on thine own soul. Lo! the Spirit of God is in thee. Thou tormentest thyself, and others thou tormentest; and thou wilt be tormented still more grievously. But God loves thee so! With what bounty has He blessed thee! Ruin not thyself, brother! change thy life."

The cutthroat frowned, and he turned away.

"Out of my way!" he exclaimed.

The godson clutched the cutthroat's knee more firmly, and burst into tears.

The cutthroat raised his eyes to the godson. He looked and he looked, and then, dismounting from his horse, he fell on his knees before the godson.

"You have conquered me, old man," he cried. "Twenty years have I struggled with you. You have won me over. I have henceforth no power over you. Do with me as it seems to you good. When you spoke to me the first time," said he, "I only did the more evil. And your words made an impression on me only when you went away from men, and I learned that you gained no advantage from men."

And the godson remembered that the peasant woman succeeded in cleaning her table only after she had rinsed out her towel. When he ceased to think about himself, his heart was purified, and he began to purify the hearts of others.

And the cutthroat said:—

"But my heart was changed within me only when you ceased to fear death."

And the godson remembered that the hoopmakers[1] only succeeded in bending their hoops after they had fastened their block: when he ceased to be afraid of death, he had fastened his life in God, and a disobedient heart became obedient.

And the cutthroat said:—

"But my heart melted entirely only when you pitied me and wept before me."

The godson was overjoyed; he led the cutthroat to the place where the firebrands had been.

They came to it, but out of the last firebrand also an apple tree had sprung!

And the godson remembered that the drovers' damp wood had kindled only when a great fire was built: when his own heart was well on fire, another's took fire from it.

And the godson was glad because now he had atoned for all his sins.

He told all this to the cutthroat, and died. The cutthroat buried him and began to live as the godson bade him, and thus became a teacher of men.

[1] *Obodchiki*, from *obod*, a felloe, or hoop.

SKAZKA

A STORY ABOUT IVAN THE FOOL AND HIS TWO BROTHERS, SEMYON THE WARRIOR AND TARAS THE POT-BELLIED, AND HIS DUMB SISTER, MALANYA, AND ABOUT THE OLD DEVIL AND THE THREE LITTLE DEVILS

(1885)

CHAPTER I

ONCE on a time a rich muzhik lived in a certain empire, in a certain kingdom. And the rich muzhik had three sons, — Semyon the warrior, Taras the pot-bellied, and Ivan the fool, — and a deaf and dumb daughter, Malanya the spinster.

Semyon the warrior went to war, to serve the Tsar; Taras the pot-bellied went to the city, to a merchant's, to engage in trade; but Ivan the fool[1] stayed at home with the girl, to work, and grow round-shouldered.

Semyon won high rank[2] and an estate, and married a nobleman's daughter. His pay was large, and his estate large, and yet he did not make ends meet: what the husband made, his wife, the lady, squandered with lavish hand; and they never had any money!

[1] Throughout this *skazka*, or folk-tale, the characteristic epithets of the muzhik's family are, for the most part, omitted in the translation. In Russian they are Semyon-voïn, Taras-briukhan, Ivan-durak, and Malanya-vyekoukha-nyemaya. The reader will have little difficulty in supplying them, either in Russian or English. It is interesting to remember, in respect to this tale, that it embodies Count Tolstoï's most radical teaching; and Count Tolstoï himself was amazed that the censor allowed it to pass, while the scientific expression of the same doctrine was tabooed.

[2] *Tchin.*

And Semyon went to his estate to collect his revenues. And the steward [1] said to him: —

"We have no way of getting any revenue; we have neither cattle nor tools, nor horses nor cows, nor plows nor harrows. All these must be got; then there will be an income."

And Semyon went to his father.

"Father," said he, "you are rich; and yet you have given me nothing. Give me my third, and I will improve my estate with it."

And the old man said: —

"You have brought nothing to my house: why should I give you a third part. It would be unfair to Ivan and the girl."

But Semyon said: —

"Now, look here; he is a fool, and she is a deaf and dumb old maid; what do they need?"

And the old man replied: —

"Be it as Ivan shall say."

But Ivan says: —

"All right, let him have it."

Semyon took his share from home, spent it on his estate, and went off again to the Tsar, to serve him.

The pot-bellied Taras also made much money; he married into the merchant family, but still he had not enough. He went to his father, and said: —

"Give me my portion."

The old man did not want to give Taras his portion either.

Said he: "You have brought nothing to us; but whatever is in the house, that Ivan has saved. And so we must not wrong him and the girl."

But Taras said: —

"What good does it do him? he is a fool. He cannot marry, no one would have him. And the dumb girl does n't need anything either. — Ivan," said he, "give me half the grain, — I won't take the tools, — and of the live-stock I will take only the gray stallion; he 's no good to you for plowing."

[1] *Prikashchik.*

Ivan laughed, and said: —

"All right; I will make a new start."

So they gave Taras his share.

Taras took the grain to the city; he took the gray stallion; and Ivan was left with one old mare, to toil like a peasant,[1] as before, and support his father and mother.

CHAPTER II

The old devil was angry because the brothers had not quarreled over the division, but had parted amicably; and he summoned three devilkins.

"Look here," says he: "there are three brothers, Semyon the warrior, Taras the pot-bellied, and Ivan the fool. They all ought to be quarreling, but they live peaceably; they visit one another.[2] The fool has ruined the whole business for me. Now you three go and get hold of the three brothers, and stir them up, so that they will scratch one another's eyes out. Can you do this?"

"We can," said they.

"How will you do it?"

"Well, we shall do it this way: first, we 'll ruin them, so that they 'll have nothing to eat, and then tie them all together; and they will fall to fighting."

"Now, that 's capital," says he. "I see you know your business. Make haste, and don't you come back to me until you have set the three by the ears, otherwise I 'll skin you all alive."

The devilkins all went to a bog and began to plan how to undertake their task. They wrangled and wrangled, for each one wished to have the easiest part of the job to do; and at last they decided to cast lots for which one each should take; and if any of them should accomplish his work first, he should come to the aid of the others.

[1] *Krestyanstvoval'*, a verb made from the noun *krestyanin*, a peasant.

[2] Literally, they exchange bread-salt with one another.

So the devilkins cast lots, and set a time to meet again in a bog, to learn who had succeeded, and who needed help.

The time appointed came, and the devilkins met in the bog according to agreement. They proceeded to describe how matters stood. The first devilkin began to tell about Semyon the warrior.

"My work," said he, "is getting along well. To-morrow," said he, "my Semyon is going to his father."

His comrades began to ask: —

"How did you bring it about?"

"Well," said he, "in the first place, I inspired Semyon with such courage that he promised his Tsar to conquer the whole world; and the Tsar made Semyon his general-in-chief, and sent him to conquer the Tsar of India. They met for battle. That very night I wet all the powder in Semyon's army, and I went to the Tsar of India and I made a countless multitude of straw soldiers. Semyon's soldiers saw the straw soldiers surrounding them on all sides, and they were frightened. Semyon ordered them to fire but their cannon and guns did not go off. Semyon's soldiers were panic-struck, and ran like sheep; and the Tsar of India slaughtered them. Semyon was disgraced: his estate was confiscated, and to-morrow they intend to execute him. But I have only one day's work more with him. I have let him out of prison, so that he may run home. To-morrow I shall finish with him; so tell us which of you two needs help."

And the second devilkin — Taras's — began to tell about his affairs.

"I need no help," said he; "my job also has gone smoothly, and Taras will not hold out more than a week. In the first place," said he, "I caused his belly to grow, and filled him with envy. So covetous has he become of others' goods, that he wishes to buy everything he sees. He has spent all his money on a host of things, and still he keeps on buying. Now he has already begun to buy on credit. His debts hang already round his neck like a weight, and he has entangled himself so

that he can't get out of the tangle. At the end of a week his obligations will fall due, and I shall make rubbish of all of his wares. .... He won't be able to pay, and he will go home to his father."

They turned now to ask the third devilkin — Ivan's: — "And how are you getting along?"

"Well," said he, "my affair does not get on well. In the first place, I spat into his jug of kvas, so as to give him the belly-ache; and I went to his field, stamped the ground as hard as a stone, so that he could not work it. I thought that he would not plow it; but he, the fool, came with his wooden plow,[1] began to work at it. His belly-ache made him groan, but he went on plowing. I broke one plow for him: he went home, exchanged it for another, bound with new withs,[2] and took up his plowing again. I crept under the soil and tried to hold back his plowshares; you could n't hold them back at all. He lays out all his strength on the plow, and the plowshares were sharp and cut my hands all up. He plowed almost the whole; only one little strip was left. Come, brothers, to my aid; for if we don't get the better of him, all our labor will be lost. If the fool is left, and is going to farm it,[3] they won't know want; he will support both his brothers."

Semyon's devilkin promised to come to his aid the next day, and the devilkins separated.

CHAPTER III

Ivan had plowed the whole fallow; only one narrow strip remained. He went out to finish it. His belly ached, but the plowing had to be done. He straightened the ropes, turned his plow, and started to plow.

[1] *Sokha.*

[2] *Podvoĭ;* these twisted withs are used to fasten the *obzhi*, or plow-tail, to the *rasokha*, or wooden cross-piece of the plow. The plow-foot is called the *polozˇ*, and the double iron share the *soshnik*. The Russians have also the word plow, *plūg:* it is a moot question whether it is a pure Slavonic word, or borrowed from the West.

[3] *Krestyanstvovat'*.

He had made only one furrow and was coming back, when it seemed to catch on a root and dragged. Now this was the devilkin, who had suddenly twisted his legs around the plowshare and was holding it.

"What a strange thing!" said Ivan to himself. "There were no roots here, but here's a root."

Ivan put his hand down into the furrow and felt something soft. He seized it, and pulled it out.

It was black, like a root; but on the root, something was wriggling. Lo! a live devilkin!

"Hey, there," said Ivan, "what a nasty thing!" and he lifted up his hand to dash it against the plow, when the devilkin began to whine.

"Don't strike me," said he, "but I will do for you whatever you wish."

"What will you do for me?"

"Only tell me what you wish."

Ivan scratched his head.

"My belly aches," said he; "can you cure it?"

"I can," said he.

"All right, cure it."

The devilkin bent down to the furrow; scratched about, scratched about with his claws; pulled out a little root, — a three-pronged root, — and gave it to Ivan.

"Here," said he; "whoever swallows this one little root, every pain will disappear."

Ivan took it, broke off the little root, and swallowed it. Immediately his belly[-ache] went away.

Again the devilkin begged.

"Let me go now," said he. "I will dive into the earth; I will never come again."

"All right. God be with you."

And the moment Ivan spoke of God, the devilkin plunged suddenly under the earth, like a stone in the water; only the hole was left.

Ivan put the two other little roots into his cap, and went on with his plowing. He plowed the strip to the end, turned over the sokha, and went home. He unharnessed, went into the izba, and found his elder

brother Semyon the warrior and his wife sitting at supper. His estate had been confiscated; he had broken out of prison, and had hurried home to his father to live.

Semyon saw Ivan.

"I have come," said he, "to live with you. Feed me and my wife until we find a new place."

"All right," said he; "live with us."

But as Ivan was about to sit down on the bench, the lady found the odor from him disgusting. She even said to her husband: —

"I cannot endure," said she, "to eat with a stinking muzhik."

And Semyon said: —

"My lady says you smell bad; you had better go out and eat in the entry."

"Very well," said he; "I must go out anyway to pasture the mare for the night."

Ivan took some bread and his kaftan, and went out for the night.

CHAPTER IV

That night Semyon's devilkin, having finished his job, went according to agreement to find Ivan's devilkin to help him subdue the fool.

He came to the field and there he searched and he searched for his comrade, but there was no sign of him anywhere — all he found was a hole.

"Well," he thought, "some ill has certainly befallen my comrade. I must take his place. The fallow has been all plowed. I shall have to subdue the fool in his hay-field."

The devilkin went to the meadow, and flooded Ivan's grass; all the hay-field was matted with mud. Ivan returned at dawn from the pasture, whetted his scythe, and went to mow the meadow. He began to mow. He swung his scythe once — he swung it twice — the scythe became so dull it would not cut at all — he had to

sharpen it. Ivan struggled and struggled. "It's no use," said he; "I am going home to get a whetstone and a slice of bread. Though I have to work a week, I won't give in till I mow it all."

The devilkin was listening; he said to himself:—

"This fool is a tough one; I shall not get him this way. We must try some other trick on him."

Ivan came back, sharpened his scythe, and began to mow. The devilkin crept into the grass, and kept catching the scythe by the heel, and thrusting the point into the ground. It was hard for Ivan, yet he kept on with his mowing; there remained only one patch[1] in the marsh. The devilkin crept into the marsh; thinks to himself: "Though I cut my paws, still I will not let him mow."

Ivan came to the marsh; the grass did not look thick, but it resisted the scythe. Ivan grew angry, began to mow with all his might; the devilkin had to give it up — he had n't time to leap away — he saw it was a bad business, and he jumped into a bush. Ivan was swinging his scythe, and, as he grazed the bush, he clipped off half of the devilkin's tail. Ivan finished mowing his field, bade the girl[2] rake it up, and went off to mow the rye.

He went out with his sickle, but the dock-tailed devilkin was there before him, and tangled up the rye, so that the sickle was useless. Ivan turned round, took his pruning-hook, and set about reaping; he reaped all the rye.

"Well, now," said he, "I must take hold of the oats."

The dock-tailed devilkin was listening; he thinks, "I did not get the better of him on the rye, so I must catch him on the oats; only wait till morning."

The devilkin hurried out in the morning to the oat-field, but the oats were already mowed. Ivan had mowed the field by night, in order that less grain might shake out.

The devilkin was enraged.

[1] *Delyanka*, generally a clearing in the woods.
[2] *Dyevka*, an unmarried girl; here the old maid Malanya.

"The fool," said he, "has hacked me and tortured me! I never saw such ill luck, even in war. The cursed fellow does not sleep; I can't get ahead of him. I am going now," said he, "to the grain-ricks; I will make them all rot for him."

And the devilkin went to the ricks of rye; he crept among the sheaves and they began to rot. He heated them, and got warm himself, and fell asleep.

But Ivan harnessed the mare, and went with the dumb girl to get them. They came to the ricks, began to pitch them up; he had pitched up two sheaves, and was just thrusting in his fork again, when the fork stuck straight into the devilkin's back; he lifted his fork — and lo! on the prongs was a live devilkin; yea, verily, with his tail cut short, and sprawling, wriggling, and trying to wriggle off.

"Hallo, there!" says he, "you nasty thing! Are you here again?"

"I," says he, "am another one; that was my brother. But I have been with your brother Semyon."

"Well," says Ivan, "whoever you are, you shall have the same treatment."

He was just going to dash him against the cart-rail, but the devilkin began to beseech him.

"Let me off," said he. "I won't do so any more, but I will do whatever you want me to."

"Well, what can you do?"

"Well," said he, "I can make soldiers out of anything you please."

"But what are they good for?"

"You can do anything with them you wish," said he. "They can do all things."

"Can they sing?"

"They can."

"Very good," said Ivan; "make some."

And the devilkin said:—

"Here, take this sheaf of rye; drag it over the ground, set it up, and merely say, 'Tis my slave's decree that thou shalt be a sheaf no more. Let every straw there is in thee a soldier be.'"

Ivan took the sheaf, dragged it over the ground, and repeated what the devilkin bade him say. And the sheaf fell asunder, and soldiers were created, with the drummer and the trumpeter playing at their head. Ivan burst out laughing.

"I declare," said he, "that's clever! How it will amuse the girls!"

"Well," said the devilkin, "let me go now."

"No," says he, "I am going to make them out of chaff; else good seed will be wasted. Show me how to change them back to the sheaf again. I'm going to thresh it."

And the devilkin said:—

"Repeat, 'Let every soldier be a straw. 'Tis my slave's decree that a sheaf thou be.'"

Ivan said this and the sheaf came back. And again the devilkin began to plead.

"Now let me go," said he.

"All right!"

Ivan seized him by the legs, held him in his hand, and pulled him from the fork.

"God be with you!" said Ivan; and as soon as he said "*s Bogom*," the devilkin plunged into the earth like a stone into water; only the hole was left.

Ivan went home; and at home he found his other brother, Taras, and his wife, sitting down to supper. Taras had failed to pay his debts, had fled from his creditors, and come home to his father. As soon as he saw Ivan, he said:—

"Well, now that I'm dead broke, keep me and my wife."

"All right," said Ivan, "stay with us."

Ivan took off his kaftan, and sat down to table.

But the merchant's wife said:—

"I can't eat with a fool. He smells of perspiration!"

So Taras said:—

"Ivan, you smell strong; go and eat in the entry."

"Well, all right," said Ivan; and, taking some bread, he went out into the yard: "It's about time for me to go to pasture, anyway."

CHAPTER V

That night Taras's devilkin, who also accomplished his job, came, according to agreement, to help his comrades to get the better of Ivan the fool. He came to the fallow; he searched and searched for his comrades. No sign of them anywhere; he found only a hole. So he went to the meadow; in the swamp he found the tail, and in the rye-stubble-field he found the other hole.

"Well," he said to himself, "some ill must have befallen my comrades. I must take their place and tackle the fool."

The devilkin went to look for Ivan. But Ivan had already left the field for the woods, to cut down trees.

The brothers had begun to find it crowded living together, and they bade the fool prepare lumber and build them new houses.

The devilkin hastened to the forest, crept into the knots, and began to hinder Ivan from falling the trees. Ivan under-cut a tree so that it should fall in a clear space; it began to fall. The mischief got into the tree; it fell in the wrong direction and became entangled in the branches.

Ivan got his cant-hook and tried to free the tree, and at last brought it to the ground. He tried to fall another; again the same thing occurred. He struggled and struggled, and with great difficulty succeeded. He took hold of a third; again the same story. Ivan had expected to cut down a half-hundred saplings, and he had not hewed down a dozen; and it was already night, and Ivan was tired out. The steam arose from him, spread through the forest like a fog; but still he would not leave off. He under-cut still another tree; his back was almost broken; and, as he had no more strength, he drove the ax into the tree, and sat down to rest.

The devilkin perceived that Ivan had ceased working; and he rejoiced.

"Well," he said to himself, "he is tired out; he will give it up. I, too, will rest now."

He seated himself astride of a limb, and chuckled. But Ivan got up, pulled out the ax, swung it, and as he hacked on the other side, the tree all at once began to crack, and fell heavily. The devilkin was not prepared for this, and had no time to get his leg out of the way; the branch broke, and nipped the devilkin by the paw. Ivan began to lop away the branches, and lo! there was a live devilkin! He was amazed.

"Hallo!" said he, "what a nasty thing! Are you here again?"

"I am another one," said he; "I have been at your brother Taras's."

"Well, whoever you are, it will be all the same with you."

Ivan flourished his ax and was about to strike him with the ax-head, but the devilkin begged for mercy.

"Don't strike me," said he, "and I will do for you whatever you wish."

"Well, then, what can you do?"

"I can make you as much money," says he, "as you wish."

"All right," says he; "do so."

And the devilkin began to show him how:—

"Take some oak leaves from this oak, and rub them in your hands. Gold will fall to the ground."

Ivan took the leaves, rubbed them, and gold fell out.

"This is good," says he, "to amuse children with, when they have leisure time."

"Let me go," says the devilkin.

"All right!"

Ivan took his cant-hook and set the devilkin free.

"God be with you!" said he, and as soon as he said the words, "*Bog s Toboï*," the devilkin plunged under the earth, like a stone into the water; only the hole was left.

CHAPTER VI

The brothers built houses, and began to live apart. But Ivan got in his crops, brewed beer, and invited his

brothers to a revel; but they refused to come as Ivan's guests.

"Have n't we seen a peasant revel?" they said.

Ivan entertained the peasant men and women; and he himself drank till he grew tipsy, and went into the street to the singers.[1] Ivan went up to the singers, and bade the women sing a song in his honor.

"I will give you," says he, "what you never saw in your lives before."

The women laughed, and began to sing a song in his honor. They finished their song and dance in his praise, and said: —

"Now, then, give it to us."

"I will bring it to you immediately," said he. He took his seed-basket and hastened out to the forest. The women made sport of him. "What a fool!" they cried, and they forgot all about him.

But lo! Ivan came running back, bringing his seed-basket full of something. "Shall I distribute it, or not?"

"Distribute it!"

Ivan took a handful of gold, and flung it among the women. Batyushki! The women sprang to pick it up; the muzhiks scrambled after it — they each tried to snatch it from the other — they carry it off. One old woman was almost crushed to death. Ivan burst out laughing.

"Oh, you fools!" said he, "why have you crushed the old grandmother? Be calmer, and I will give you more."

He began to scatter more. The people crowded around; Ivan emptied his whole seed-basket. They still begged for more.

But Ivan said: —

"That 's all; another time I 'll give you some more. Now for a dance. Sing us your songs!"

The women began to sing their songs.

"Your songs," said he, "are no good."

"What kind of ones are better?" they asked.

[1] *Khorovodui;* the band, or *ulitsa*, of village lads and lasses who dance and sing at festivals.

"Well, I 'll show you," says he, "in a little while."

He went to the barn, pulled out a sheaf, threshed it, stood it up, dragged it on the ground.

"Now," said he, "slave, now decree that it shall be a sheaf no more, but every straw a soldier."[1]

The sheaf fell apart, the soldiers stood forth, the drums and trumpets played.

Ivan commanded the soldiers to sing some songs; he came with them up the street. The people were amazed. The soldiers sang their songs, and then Ivan led them back to the barn; but he commanded that no one should follow him, and turned the soldiers into a sheaf again, and flung it on the pile.

He went home, and lay down to sleep in the stable.

CHAPTER VII

In the morning the elder brother, Semyon the warrior, who had heard about these doings, came to Ivan.

"Show me," said he, "where you got soldiers, and where you have taken them."

"But what good," says he, "will it do you?"

"Why do you ask? With soldiers, everything can be done. One can win a kingdom for one's self."

Ivan was amazed.

"Really?" said he; "why did n't you say so long ago? I will make you as many as you wish. It 's well the girl and I put aside a good many."

Ivan took his brother to the barn, and said: —

"Look, I will make them; but you must march them away, for, if we have to feed them, then they will eat up the whole village in a day."

Semyon promised to march the soldiers away, and Ivan began to make them. He thumped a sheaf on the barn floor — a squad appeared! He thumped another

[1] "*Sdyelaĭ kholop*
Chtob buil nye snop
A kazhdaya solomnika — soldat."

— another squad. He made so many of them that they filled the whole field.

"Well, will that be enough?"

Semyon was delighted, and said:—

"That'll be enough. Thank you, Ivan."

"All right," says he; "if you need any more, come back, and I will make some more. We have a great deal of straw this season."

Semyon the warrior immediately gave orders to his army, drew them up in proper order, and went off to make war.

Hardly had Semyon gone when Taras the pot-bellied made his appearance — he also had heard of yesterday's doings, and he began to beg his brother.

"Show me where you get gold money. If I had such an abundance of free money, I would with that money get in money from all over the world."

Ivan was amazed.

"Really? You should have told me long ago. I will make you as much as you like."

His brother was delighted.

"Give me only three basketfuls."

"All right," said he, "let us go to the woods; but put in the horse — it'll be too much for you to lug."

They went to the forest; Ivan began to rub the oak leaves. He made a great heap.

"Is that enough, or not?"

Taras was delighted.

"Enough for now," says he. "Thanks, Ivan."

"All right," says he. "If you need more, come to me, and I will rub some more for you; plenty of leaves are left."

Taras gathered up a whole cartful, and went off to trade.

Both brothers went off, and Semyon began to make war, and Taras to trade. And Semyon conquered for himself a tsardom, and Taras made a vast heap of money in trade.

The brothers met, and told each other whence Semyon got his soldiers, and Taras his money.

And Semyon said to his brother:—

"I," said he, "have conquered for myself a tsardom; and I might live well, only — I have not enough money to keep my soldiers."

And Taras said: —

"And I," said he, "have gathered together a great heap of money; but," said he, "there's one trouble, there is no one to guard my money."

And Semyon said: —

"Let us go," said he, "to our brother. I will bid him make some more soldiers — I will give you enough to guard your money, but you must bid him rub enough money for me to sustain my soldiers."

And they went to Ivan.

They went to Ivan, and Semyon said: —

"I have n't enough soldiers, brother," said he; "make me some more soldiers; change at least two ricks into soldiers."

Ivan shook his head.

"No use," said he; "I am not going to make you any more soldiers."

"But how is that?" said he. "You promised me you would."

"I know I promised," said he; "but I will not make any more."

"But why, you fool, won't you make any more?"

"Well, because your soldiers killed a man. The other day I was plowing by the road, and I saw a baba carrying along the road a coffin, and she was wailing. I asked her, 'Who is dead?' She said, 'Semyon's soldiers have killed my husband in the war.' I thought that soldiers were for singing songs, but they have put a man to death. I will give you no more."

And thus he persisted, and refused to make any more soldiers.

Taras now began to implore Ivan to make some more gold money for him.

Ivan shook his head.

"No use," said he, "I will not rub any more."

"Well, but how is this?" said Taras. "You promised me you would."

"I promised," said he, "but I will not make any more."

"But why, you fool, will you not make any more?"

"Well, because your gold pieces have robbed Mikhaĭlovna of her cow!"

"How have they robbed her?"

"In this way they have robbed her: Mikhaĭlovna had a cow, her children drank milk; but lately her children have come to me to beg milk. And I said to them, 'Where is your cow?' They said, 'Taras, the pot-bellied overseer, came along, gave our mamushka three gold pieces, and she let him have the cow; now we have no milk to drink.' I thought that you wanted to play with the gold pieces, but you have robbed the children of their cow; I will not give you any more."

And the fool was firm, and would give no more. And so the brothers went away.

The brothers went away, and began to plan how to help their misfortune. Semyon said:—

"See here, this is what we'll do: you give me money to maintain my soldiers, and I will give you half my tsardom, with soldiers to guard your money."

Taras agreed. So the brothers went shares, and both became tsars, and both were rich.

CHAPTER VIII

But Ivan lived at home, supported his father and mother, worked with the dumb girl in the field.

Now, it happened one day that Ivan's old watch-dog[1] fell sick, grew mangy, and almost died. Ivan was sorry for him; got some bread from the dumb girl, put it in his cap, carried it to the dog, and threw it to him. But the cap was torn, and a little root fell with the bread.

The old dog swallowed it with the bread. And as soon as the dog had swallowed the root, he jumped up, began to frisk around, to bark, to wag his tail, and got well.

[1] *Sobaka dvornaya*, yard-dog.

The father and mother saw this and were amazed.

"How," said they, "did you cure the dog?"

And Ivan said: —

"I had two little roots, — they will cure any pain, — and the dog swallowed one of them."

And it happened about this time that the Tsar's daughter fell ill; and the Tsar published through all cities and towns, that whoever should cure her should be rewarded; and, if he were unmarried, that he should receive, in addition, the Tsar's daughter in marriage. The proclamation was made also in Ivan's village.

Ivan's father and mother called him in, and said to him, "Have you heard what the Tsar proclaims? You have said that you have a little root; make haste, and cure the Tsar's daughter. You will win good luck for life."

"All right," said he.

And Ivan got ready to start; they spruced him up.

Ivan went out on the door-step; he sees standing there a beggar woman, with a crippled hand.

"I have heard," said she, "that you can cure folks. Cure my hand, for now I cannot put on my own shoes."

And Ivan said: —

"All right."

He took out the little root and gave it to the beggar woman and bade her swallow it. The beggar woman swallowed it and became cured; she began at once to use her hand.

Ivan's father and mother came out to go with him to the Tsar. When they learned that Ivan had given away his last rootlet, and had nothing to cure the Tsar's daughter with, his father and mother began to upbraid him.

"You had pity on the beggar woman," said they, "but on the Tsar's daughter you had no pity."

Ivan began to feel sorry for the Tsar's daughter also. He harnessed the horse, spread straw in the cart, and started.

"Now, where are you going, fool?"

"To cure the Tsar's daughter."

"Yes, but see here: you have nothing to cure her with."

"It 's all right," said he; and he started up the horse.

He came to the Tsar's palace; and, as soon as he mounted the steps, the Tsar's daughter got well.

The Tsar was overjoyed, commanded Ivan to be brought to him. He clothed him and decorated him. "Be my son-in-law!" said he.

"All right," said Ivan.

And Ivan married the Tsarevna. And soon the Tsar died, and Ivan became Tsar.

Thus all three of the brothers were tsars.

CHAPTER IX

The three brothers lived and reigned.[1]

The eldest brother, Semyon the warrior, got along well. With his straw soldiers he collected real soldiers. He commanded that every ten houses throughout his whole tsardom should furnish a soldier, and that this soldier should be tall in stature, and white in body, and clean in face. And he collected many such soldiers, and drilled them all. And when any one contradicted him in anything, he immediately sent these soldiers, and he did whatever he pleased. And all began to fear him.

And life was pleasant to him. Whatever he fancied, and whatever his eyes rested on, became his. He would send soldiers, and they would seize and bring to him all he wanted.

Taras the pot-bellied also got along well. He did not waste the money he had got from Ivan, but he made great additions to it. He also set up fine arrangements in his tsardom. He kept his money in coffers, and he exacted money from the people. He exacted money for their serfs,[2] and for their walking and driving, and for their bark shoes,[3] and for their leg-wrappers, and for their

[1] *Tsarstvovali.* [2] *Dushi;* literally, souls.
[3] *Lapti,* shoes made of linden bark.

flounces. And whatever he fancied was his. For money they would bring him anything; and they were glad to work for him because every one must have money.

And Ivan the fool did not live poorly. As soon as he had buried his father-in-law, he took off all his royal raiment and gave it to his wife to lock up in the chest; he dressed in his hempen shirt again, put on his drawers and bark shoes, and betook himself to work.

"It is tiresome to me," said he; "I am growing fat, and I have no appetite, and I can't sleep."

He brought his father and mother, and the dumb girl, and began once more to work.

And they said to him: —

"But, don't you see, you are the Tsar!"

"Well," said he, "even a Tsar must eat."

The minister came to him, and said: —

"We have no money to pay salaries."

"All right," said he; "if you have none, then don't pay them."

"But they won't serve."

"All right," said he; "let them not serve. They will have all the more time to work. Let them carry out manure; they have heaped up a lot."

They came to Ivan to hold a trial. One said, "He stole my money."

And Ivan said: —

"All right! that shows he needed it."

All perceived that Ivan was a fool; and his wife said to him: —

"They say you are a fool."

"All right!" said he.

Ivan's wife thought and thought; but she also was a fool.[1]

"What is the use," she asked herself, "for me to go against my husband? Where the needle goes the thread follows."

She took off her royal raiment, locked it up in the chest, went to the dumb girl, and learned how to work.

[1] *Dura*, fool, does not exactly express it, any more than its masculine, *durak*. Crazy, mad, is the adjective that corresponds.

When she had learned how to work, she began to help her husband.

And all the wise left Ivan's tsardom; only fools were left. No one had money. They lived, they worked, they supported themselves, and supported good men.

CHAPTER X

The old devil waited and waited for tidings from the devilkins, about their success in destroying the three brothers; but no tidings came. He himself went to investigate. He searched and searched, but could find nothing of them except the three holes.

"Well," says he to himself, "plainly they did not get the better of them. I must tackle it myself."

He started to find the brothers, but they were not in their old places. He found them in their different kingdoms. All three are alive, reigning as tsars. This seemed outrageous to the old devil.

"Well," says he, "I had better take hold of this job myself."

He went first of all to Tsar Semyon. He went not in his own shape, but changed into a vaïvode,[1] came to Tsar Semyon.

"Tsar Semyon, I have heard," said he, "that you are a great warrior; and I know that business well. I wish to enter your service."

The Tsar Semyon began to question him, and, seeing that he was a man of sense, took him into his service.

The new vaïvode began to show Tsar Semyon how to collect a powerful army.

"First," said he, "it is necessary to collect more soldiers; and now," said he, "many people are idly wandering up and down your tsardom. It is necessary," said he, "to recruit all the young men, without exception; then you will have an army five times as large as before. Secondly, it is necessary to get new rifles and cannon. I will get for you rifles which will shoot a hun-

[1] Russian *voyevoda*, army leader; also written in English, waywode.

dred bullets at a time so that they will fly about like peas. And I will get cannon which will consume with fire either man, or horse, or wall — they will burn everything up."

Tsar Semyon listened to his new vaïvode, and ordered all the young men, without distinction, to be taken as soldiers; and he established new manufactories. He made new rifles and cannon, and immediately went to war with a neighboring Tsar.

As soon as the army came out to meet them, Tsar Semyon ordered his soldiers to let fly at it with bullets, and to hurl fire at it from the cannon, and at one blow he disabled and burned up half the army. The neighboring Tsar was frightened, he humbled himself and surrendered his tsardom. Tsar Semyon was overjoyed.

"Now," said he, "I am going to attack the Tsar of India."

But the Tsar of India had heard about Tsar Semyon, and had adopted all of his inventions; yes, and, moreover, added some of his own. The Tsar of India not only began to take as soldiers young men, but also enlisted all the single women as soldiers; and his army became even larger than Tsar Semyon's. And he copied from Tsar Semyon all his rifles and cannon, and, moreover, invented a method of flying through the air, and launching explosive bombshells from above.

Tsar Semyon went to war against the Tsar of India — he thought to win in battle as before; but the scythe that once cut was dulled; the Tsar of India did not let Semyon's army come within gunshot, but he sent his women soldiers up into the air to launch explosive bombshells upon Semyon's army. The women began to shower bombs from above upon Semyon's army, like borax on cockroaches; all Semyon's army took to flight, and Tsar Semyon was left alone. The Tsar of India took Semyon's tsardom, and Semyon barely escaped with his life.[1]

The old devil finished with this brother, and went to Tsar Taras. He changed into a merchant, and settled

[1] *Kuda glaza glyadyat;* literally, whither the eyes look.

in Taras's tsardom; he established a business house, began to pay out his money. The merchant began by paying high prices for every sort of thing, and all the people flocked to the merchant — to make money. And the people made so much money that they all paid their debts, and began to pay their taxes promptly.

Tsar Taras was delighted.

"Thanks to the merchant," said he to himself, "now I shall get still more money — my life will be still better."

And Tsar Taras endeavored to make new plans; he began to build a new palace for himself. He notified the people to bring him lumber and stone and to set to work for him; he offered high prices for everything. Tsar Taras thought that, judging by the past, the people would come to work for him in crowds for the money. But lo! they brought all the lumber and stone to the merchant, and all the working-people flocked to him. Tsar Taras raised his offer, but the merchant went still higher. Tsar Taras had much money, but the merchant still more; and the merchant's price was better than the Tsar's. The Tsar's palace was at a standstill; building stopped.

A park had been laid out for Tsar Taras. The autumn came. Taras invited the people to come to him to work in the park — no one came — all the people were engaged in digging a pond for the merchant.

Winter came. Tsar Taras wanted to buy sable furs for a new shuba; he sent out to buy them — his messenger came back, saying: —

"There are no sable furs. The merchant has them all; he gave a higher price, and he has made a carpet out of the sable skins."

Tsar Taras wanted to buy some stallions; he sent out to buy them — his agents returned, saying: —

"The merchant has all the good stallions; they are carrying water to fill up his pond."

All the Tsar's affairs came to a standstill; no one would do anything for him, but they did everything for the merchant; and all they bring him is the merchant's money, which they pay for their taxes.

And the Tsar collected so much money that he had nowhere to put it, and life became wretched. The Tsar had now ceased to make plans — his only concern was to live at all — even this was impossible. He ran short of everything. His cooks and coachmen left him and took service with the merchant. It had now gone so far that he had nothing to eat. If he sent to the bazaar to buy anything — there was nothing to be got; the merchant had bought up everything, and the people brought him only money for taxes!

Tsar Taras was angry, and banished the merchant beyond the frontier; but the merchant settled down on the very frontier and went on as before, all exactly the same; for the sake of the merchant's money they carry everything away from the Tsar to the merchant. It became utterly wretched for the Tsar; for days at a time, there was nothing to eat; the report spread even that the merchant was boasting that he was going to buy the Tsar himself. Tsar Taras became alarmed, and did not know what to do.

Semyon the warrior came to him, and said: —

"Help me! the Tsar of India has conquered me."

But the affairs of Taras the Tsar himself were in a knot.

"I myself," said he, "have not had anything to eat for two days."

CHAPTER XI

The old devil had finished with two of the brothers, and he came to Ivan. The old devil changed into a vaïvode and came to Ivan, and tried to persuade him to form an army.

Said he, "It does not become a Tsar to live without an army. Only give me orders, and I will gather soldiers from your people, and form an army."

Ivan listened to him.

"All right," said he, "form an army; but teach them to sing songs most cleverly. I like that."

The old devil set to work to enlist volunteer soldiers throughout Ivan's dominion. He bade them take service:[1] each recruit would have a measure of vodka[2] and a red cap.

The fools burst into a laugh.

"We have enough brandy," said they, "we make it ourselves; and as for caps, our women will make us as many as you like, even striped ones; yes, and with tassels too!"

And so he got no recruits. The old devil came to Ivan and said:—

"Your fools will not enlist as volunteers; they must be made to enlist."

"All right," said he, "make them enlist."

And the old devil gave orders that all the fools should be enrolled as soldiers, and whoever did not come, Ivan would put to death.

The fools came to the vaïvode, and said:—

"You tell us that if we will not go as soldiers, the Tsar will put us to death; but you do not tell us what will happen to us in the army. They say that even soldiers are killed."

"Yes, but not without reason."

The fools heard this, and were obstinate.

"We will not go," they said. "It is better for us to wait for death at home. Even thus it is not to be escaped."

"You are fools, fools!" said the old devil; "soldiers may get killed, or may not; but if you don't come, Ivan the Tsar will assuredly put you to death."

The fools pondered a little; they went to Ivan the fool to ask him.

"A vaïvode," said they, "appeared and commanded us all to go as soldiers. 'If you go as soldiers,' said he, 'you may be killed, or may not; but if you don't come, then the Tsar Ivan will assuredly put you to death.' Is this true?"

Ivan burst into a laugh.

[1] *Lbui brit*, shave their foreheads.

[2] A *shtof;* eight of these measures make a *vyedro*, or 2.70 gallons.

"How," said he, "can I, who am one, put you all to death? If I were not a fool, I would explain it for you; but now I don't understand it myself."

"Then," say they, "we will not go."

"All right," says he, "don't go."

The fools went to the vaïvode, and refused to enlist.

The old devil saw that his work was not prospering. He went to the Tarakan[1]-tsar: he went in disguise.

"Come on," said he, "let us make war on Ivan the Tsar. He has not much money, but he has grain and cattle, and all sorts of good things."

The Tarakan-tsar prepared to make war; he collected a great army; procured rifles and cannon and crossed the frontier, began to march into Ivan's dominion.

Folks came to Ivan and said:—

"The Tarakan-tsar is marching to make war upon us."

"All right," says he, "let him come."

The Tarakan-tsar crossed the frontier with his army, and sent out scouts to reconnoiter and find Ivan's army. They searched and searched; but there was no army! They waited and waited for one to appear somewhere! But there was no sign of an army — nobody to fight with! The Tarakan-tsar sent to seize the villages. The soldiers came to one village. The fools — men and women — ran out and gazed at the soldiers — in astonishment.

The soldiers began to rob the fools of their grain and their cattle. The fools gave them up, and no one offered resistance.

The soldiers came to another village — the same thing happened there. The soldiers went on for one day; they went on for another day; everywhere always the same thing: everything was given up, no one offered to resist, but instead they invited the soldiers to live with them.

"If life is so wretched over on your side, dear friends," they say, "come and live with us!"

The soldiers marched and marched, — still no army! And all the people lived by feeding themselves and

[1] *Uarakan* is a cockroach, or beetle.

others; and they offered no resistance, but invited the soldiers to live with them.

It became dull work to the soldiers; they returned to their Tarakan-tsar, and said: —

"We cannot fight here; lead us to some other place. The war would have been good, good; but this is like cutting kissel-jelly. We cannot make war any longer here."

The Tarakan-tsar was angry, and commanded the soldiers to overrun the whole tsardom; to pick quarrels; to set villages, houses, grain, on fire; to kill the cattle.

"If you do not obey my command," said he, "all of you," said he, "I will put you to death."

The soldiers were frightened; they began to carry out the ukase on the tsardom. They began to burn houses, grain; to kill the cattle. Still the fools offered no resistance, but only wept. The old men wept, the old women wept, the young children wept.

"Why," said they, "do you injure us? Why," said they, "do you waste good things? If you need anything, you had better take it for yourselves!"

It seemed outrageous to the soldiers. They went no farther, and the whole army took to its heels.

CHAPTER XII

So the old devil also went off — he could not catch Ivan by his soldiers.

The old devil changed into a fine gentleman,[1] and came to live in Ivan's dominions;[2] he made up his mind to catch him by means of money, as he had Taras.

"I wish," said he, "to do you a good turn, — to teach you how to be wise. I am going to build a house among you, and establish a business."

"All right," says Ivan, "live here."

The fine gentleman spent the night, and in the morn-

[1] *Gospodin.* [2] *Tsarstvo.*

ing went to the public square, took a great bag of gold, and sheets of paper, and said: —

"You live, all of you," said he, "like swine; I want to teach you how you ought to live. Build me," said he, "a house on this plan. You work, and I will show you how; and I will pay you in gold coin."

And he showed them the gold. The fools wondered. They had no money in manufactures, and they bartered among themselves one thing for another, and paid in labor. They wondered at the gold, and said: —

"They are pretty little trinkets."

And they began to exchange their produce and work for the gentleman's gold pieces. The old devil began to be free with his gold, as he had in Taras's case; and they began to exchange all sorts of things for his gold, and to do all sorts of work for it.

The old devil was overjoyed; he said to himself: "My scheme is coming on excellently. Now I am going to ruin the fool as I did Taras; and I shall buy him absolutely, body and soul."[1]

As soon as the fools got their gold coins, they gave them to their women for necklaces; all the girls twined them into their tresses. And even the children in the streets began to use them as toys to play with. All had a quantity, and they ceased taking any more. But still the fine gentleman's mansion was not half completed, and he had not as yet provided enough grain and cattle for the year. And the gentleman publicly invited the people to work for him, to cart him grain, to bring him cattle; for all kinds of things, and for all kinds of work, he would give much gold.

But no one came to work, and no one brought anything. Only now and then a lad or a little girl happened along to exchange an egg for a gold piece, but no one else came, and he soon had nothing to eat.

The fine gentleman began to get famished; went through a village to buy himself a dinner. He made his way into one dvor; offered gold for a hen; the woman of the house refused it, saying: —

[1] *S potrokhom*, with his inwards!

"I have a lot of these things."

He made his way into a poor peasant woman's hut,[1] to buy a herring, and offered a gold piece.

"I don't need it, kind sir," said she. "I have no children," said she, "to play with such a thing; and I have already got three pieces as curiosities."

He made his way into a muzhik's to get bread; the muzhik also refused the money.

"I don't need it," said he. "But if you are begging in Christ's name,[2] just wait till I tell my woman to cut you off a slice of bread."

The devil spat, and hastened away from the muzhik. He could not stomach that *For Christ's sake;*[2] even to hear the words hurt him worse than a knife.

And so he got no bread.

All had sufficient; wherever the old devil went, no one would give him anything for money; but all said: "*Bring something else*," or "*Come and work*," or "*Take it, in Christ's name.*"[2]

But the devil had nothing except money, and no desire to work; and the *Christ's sake* he cannot stomach. The old devil grew angry.

"What do you need more," he asked, "when I offer you money? You can buy everything for gold, and hire every kind of workman."

The fools would not listen to him.

"No," said they, "we don't need it. No one here pays taxes or wages. What should we want of money?"

The old devil went to bed without any supper.

This affair was reported to Ivan the fool. Folks came to ask him:—

"What are we to do? This fine gentleman appeared among us: he likes to eat and drink good things; he likes to dress neatly; but he does not like to work, and he does not ask alms in Christ's name;[2] but he offers only gold pieces everywhere. Until we got enough of them, we gave him what he wanted for them; but now

[1] *Bobuilka.*

[2] *Radi Khrista,* for Christ's sake, the common plea of a Russian beggar.

we don't give him any more. What are we to do with him? He will be dying of starvation."

Ivan listened.

"All right," said he. "We must support him. Let him go from dvor to dvor as the shepherd goes."

No help for it: the old devil began to go from dvor to dvor. He came in due time to Ivan's house.

The old devil came in to dinner; and at Ivan's the dumb girl was getting it ready.

Those who were the laziest had often deceived her. They would leave their work unfinished and hurry in to dinner before the rest, and eat up all the kasha-gruel. And the dumb girl had learned to recognize the sluggard by his hands. Any one who had callous places on his hands, she would seat at the table; but the one who had not, she gave the scraps to.

The old devil slipped in behind the table; but the dumb girl seized him by the hands and examined them closely; there were no callous places, and the hands were clean, smooth, and the nails were long. The dumb girl grunted, and pulled the devil away from the table.

But Ivan's wife said to him:—

"Do not be offended, my fine gentleman; my sister-in-law does not allow those who have not callous hands to come to table.... Here, have patience; the men are almost done eating, then you shall have what is left."

The old devil was affronted because at the Tsar's they wanted him to feed like the pigs. He said to Ivan:—

"It is a foolish law you have in your dominions — that all people must work with their hands. You invented it in your stupid way. Why should people work with their hands alone? Do you realize in what way men of intellect work?"

But Ivan said:—

"How should we fools know? We always do the most of our work with our hands and with our backs."

"That is because you are fools. But I," said he, "will teach you how to work with your brains; then you will know that head-work is more profitable than hand-work."

Ivan was amazed.

"Well," said he, "we are not called fools for nothing."

And the old devil said, "But it is not easy," says he, "to work with the brain. Here you did not allow me to eat with you because my hands were not calloused, but you do not understand that it is a hundred times more difficult to work with the brain. Sometimes the head even splits."

Ivan grew thoughtful.

"Why, then, friend," said he, "do you torment yourself so? Is it pleasant when the head splits? You would much better do easy work — with the hands and the back."

But the devil said: —

"Why should I bother myself to take pity on you fools? If I did not bother myself, you would be fools forever. But I have worked with my brains, and now I am going to teach you."

Ivan was amazed.

"Teach us," said he, "and then when the hands get tired out, then change them for head-work."

And the devil promised to teach them.

And Ivan proclaimed throughout all his dominions, that a fine gentleman had come who would teach all how to work with the brains, and said that more could be produced with their brains than with their hands, and that the people should come and be taught.

There was in Ivan's tsardom a high tower, and steep stairs led up to it; and on the top there was a platform. And Ivan took the gentleman there, so that he might be in sight of all.

The gentleman stood on the tower, and began to speak from it. And the fools gathered to see him. The fools thought that the gentleman was going to show them how to work with the brain apart from the hands. But the old devil only taught them in words how it was possible to live without work.

The fools could not understand at all. They gazed and gazed, and then went in different directions to their labors.

The old devil stood one day on the tower, stood for another day, and talked all the time. He began to get hungry. But the fools thought it needless to bring bread to the tower. They thought that if he could work better with his head than with his hands, then it would be mere play for the head to provide bread.

And the old devil stood for still another day on the platform, talking all the time. And the people would come up and look and stare, and then go away again.

And Ivan asked: "Well, has the gentleman begun to work with his head yet?"

"Not yet," said the people; "he is still spouting away." The old devil stood a second day on the platform, and he began to grow weak. He staggered once, and thumped his head against the post. One fool noticed it, and told Ivan's wife; and Ivan's wife hurried out to her husband, in the fallow field.

"Let us go," says she, "and look; they say that the gentleman is beginning to work with his head."

Ivan was surprised.

"Really?" said he. He turned the horse round and went to the tower.

By the time he reached the tower the old devil was thoroughly weak from hunger, and began to totter and whacked his head against the post. And just as Ivan came, the devil stumbled, fell with a thundering noise down the stairs, heels over head; he counted all the steps.

"Well," says Ivan, "the fine gentleman told the truth when he said that sometimes the head splits; that's its kind of callosities. From such work the head gets covered with bumps."

The old devil came bumping down the stairs, and thumped against the ground. Ivan was just going to see whether he had accomplished much work, when, suddenly, the earth opened, and the old devil fell through the earth; only the hole was left.

Ivan scratched his head. "Ah, ha!" says he. "What a nasty thing! There he was again! Must have been the father. What a healthy one!"

Ivan is still living, and all the people are thronging to his dominions; and his brothers have come to him, and he supports them. Whoever comes, and says, "Give us food," — "All right," says he; "you 're welcome! we have plenty of everything."

There is only one regulation in his tsardom: Whoever has callous hands, comes to the table; and who has not, gets what is left.

THE STORY OF YEMILYAN AND THE EMPTY DRUM

(1891)

YEMILYAN lived out as a day-laborer. Once upon a time he was on his way to the meadow where his work was, and lo and behold! a frog leaped out before him. He almost set his foot on it. But he stepped over it. Suddenly he heard some one calling to him from behind. He looked round and saw a beautiful girl standing there, and she said to him: —

"Yemilyan, why are you not married?"

"How could I be married, my pretty maid. Look at me; I have nothing at all. No one would take me."

"Well," said the girl, "take me for a wife."

The girl greatly pleased Yemilyan; said he: —

"I should like to; but where should we live?"

"That is something to think about," said the girl. "Hard work and little sleep is all that is required; but we can find clothes and food anywhere."

"Very good, I 'm agreed; let us get married. Where shall we go?"

"Let us go to the city."

Yemilyan and the girl went to the city. The girl took him to a little cottage at the farther end of the city, and they were married and lived there.

One time the voyevode came to the city. He passed by Yemilyan's cottage, and Yemilyan's wife went out to look at him. When the voyevode saw her he was amazed.

"Where did such a beauty as that come from?"

He reined in his horse, and summoned Yemilyan's wife, and began to question her.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"The wife of the peasant Yemilyan," said she.

"How did it happen," said he, "that such a beautiful woman as you married a peasant? You ought to be a princess."

"Thank you," said she, "for your flattering remark, but I am satisfied with my husband."

The voyevode talked with her awhile, and then rode on his way. He reached his palace. But he could not help thinking of Yemilyan's wife. He lay awake all night long, planning how he might get her away from Yemilyan. He could not think of any way of doing it. He summoned his servants, and bade them devise some way. And the voyevode's servants said to him: —

"Take Yemilyan as your workman," said they. "We 'll work him to death; his wife will be a widow, and then you can have her."

So the voyevode did; he sent for Yemilyan to come to him as a dvornik, and offered him a house for him and his wife.

The messengers came and told Yemilyan their story. But Yemilyan's wife said: —

"Very good," said she. "Go. Work there during the daytime, but at night return to me."

Yemilyan went. When he reached the palace, the voyevode's steward said to him: —

"Why have you come alone, without your wife?"

"Why should I bring her? Her place is at home."

In the voyevode's courtyard they gave him so much work to do that two men could not have accomplished it. Yemilyan took hold of the work, but it seemed hopeless for him to finish it. But lo and behold! when evening came it was all done. The steward saw that he had finished it, and gave him four times as much for the next day. Yemilyan went home and found the house all neatly swept and in order; the fire was burning in the stove, the baking and boiling were under way. His wife was sitting at the table sewing and waiting for her

husband. When he entered she met him, got supper ready, and, after he had had all he wanted to eat and drink, she began to ask him about his work.

"Well," said he, "it went badly. They gave me more than I had strength to do. They are going to kill me with work."

"Now, then," said she, "don't you worry about your work, and don't look back and don't look forward to see if much has been done and much remains to be done. Only work. All will come out right."

Yemilyan went to bed. The next morning he went to his work again. He took hold of it, and not once did he look round. And lo and behold! it was all done by four o'clock, and while it was still light he went home for the night. And though they kept adding to his tasks, still Yemilyan always managed to finish it up and go home for the night.

Thus passed a week. The voyevode's servants perceived that they could not overcome the muzhik by "black work." They began to impose handiwork upon him, but this also proved vain. Carpentry work and mason work and the art of thatching — whatever they imposed upon him, that Yemilyan got done in ample time for him to go home and spend the night with his wife. Thus passed a second week. The voyevode summoned his servants, and said: —

"I should like to know if I feed you for doing nothing? Here two weeks have passed and I can't see that you have done anything at all. You were going to put Yemilyan out of the way for me, but from the window I see him going home every afternoon, singing songs. I should like to know if you are scheming to turn me into ridicule?"

The servants began to justify themselves: —

"We tried with all our might," said they, "to kill him off by 'black work,' but we could not do anything with him. Everything we gave him to work at he worked out, and we could not tire him. Then we gave him handiwork to do, thinking he would not have wit enough to do it, but in this too we failed to get him. It

is like magic. As soon as he touches anything it is done. It must be that either he or his wife practises some witchcraft. We are tired to death of him. And now we are trying to think of something that he can't do. We have decided to make him build a new cathedral in one day. So will you summon Yemilyan and command him to build a new cathedral opposite your palace in one day? And if he does not have it done, then we will have his head cut off as a punishment."

The voyevode sent for Yemilyan.

"Well," said he, "this is my command. Build me a new cathedral on the square opposite my palace, so that it shall be all done to-morrow evening. If you get it built, I will reward you; if you fail, I shall punish you."

Yemilyan heard the command, he turned round and went home.

"Well," said he to himself, "that's the end of me."

He went to his wife and said:—

"Get yourself ready, wife; we must make our escape somewhere or other, else we shall be ruined."

"Why," said she, "are you such a coward that you must run away?"

"How can I help being?" said he. "The voyevode has ordered me to come to-morrow and build a new cathedral all in one day. And if I don't get it built, he threatens to cut off my head. The only thing left to do is to escape while there is time."

But his wife would not hear to this.

"The voyevode has many servants. They will catch us anywhere. You can't escape from him. But since you have the power, you must obey him."

"Yes, but how can one obey him, if one has not the power?"

"Listen, batyushka. Don't you worry. Eat your supper and go to bed. In the morning get up a little earlier than usual; you 'll have it all done."

Yemilyan went to bed; his wife wakened him.

"Go," said she, "build your cathedral as quickly as possible. Here are nails and a hammer; there 'll be work enough for you for the day."

Yemilyan went to the city; when he got there the new cathedral was already standing in the midst of the square, almost finished. Yemilyan went to work to finish it; by evening it was all complete.

The voyevode woke up, he looked out of his palace window, and saw that the cathedral was already built. Yemilyan was walking up and down, here and there driving in nails. And the voyevode was not pleased to see the cathedral; he was vexed because he had nothing to punish Yemilyan for, and could not take away his wife. So he called his servants again.

"Yemilyan has accomplished his task; there is nothing to punish him for. This task," said he, "was too small for him. Something craftier must be thought up. Put your wits to work, or else I will punish you instead of him."

And the voyevode's servants suggested that he should command Yemilyan to make a river which should flow round the palace, and that ships should be sailing on it. The voyevode summoned Yemilyan, and laid before him the new task.

"If you are able," said he, "in one night to build a cathedral, then you will be able to do this also. See to it that to-morrow everything be as I have commanded. And if it is not ready, then I will cut off your head."

Yemilyan was more than ever discouraged, and he returned to his wife in a very gloomy frame of mind.

"Why," said his wife, "are you so discouraged? Have you some new task imposed on you?"

Yemilyan told her.

"We must make our escape," said he.

But his wife said:—

"You can't run away; they will catch you everywhere; you must obey."

"Yes, but how can I obey?"

"Well, batyushka, there is nothing to be discouraged about. Eat your supper and go to bed. But get up earlier than usual; everything will be in order."

Yemilyan went to bed and slept. Early in the morning his wife waked him.

"Go," said she, "go to the city, all is ready. You will find one mound only at the harbor. Take your spade and level it off."

Yemilyan started. He reached the city; round the palace was a river, ships were sailing on it. Yemilyan reached the harbor, he saw the uneven place, and began to level it.

The voyevode woke up, he saw a river where no river had been; ships were sailing on it and Yemilyan was leveling a mound with his spade. The voyevode was horror-struck and was not rejoiced at the sight of the river and the ships; but he was vexed because he could not punish Yemilyan. He said to himself: —

"There is no task that he cannot accomplish it. What shall we try now?"

He summoned his servants and proceeded to consult with them.

"Think up some task," said he, "that will be above Yemilyan's powers. For whatever you have so far devised for him, he has done at once, and it is impossible to take his wife from him."

The servants cudgeled their brains, and at last had a bright idea. They came to the voyevode and said: —

"You must summon Yemilyan and say to him: —

"'Go somewhere, you know not where, and bring back something, you know not what.' He won't be able to escape from this. Wherever he goes you will say that he went to the wrong place, and whatever he brings back you will say that he brought back the wrong thing. Then you will be able to punish him and take away his wife."

This pleased the voyevode.

"This time," said he, "you have had a bright idea."

He sent for Yemilyan and said to him: —

"Go somewhere, you know not where, and bring back something, you know not what, and if you don't bring it, I will cut your head off."

Yemilyan went to his wife, and told her what the voyevode had said. His wife put on her thinking-cap.

"Well," said she, "they 've been teaching the voyevode something to his own ruin. We must work now wisely."

She sat down, pondered for a while, and then said to her husband: —

"You will have to take a long journey — to our babushka, our grandmother — to the ancient peasant mother — and you must ask for her good-will. And from her you will receive an object; then go straightway to the voyevode, and I shall be there. For now I shall not get out of their hands. They will take me by force, but not for long. If you do all the old babushka commands, you will speedily rescue me."

The wife got her husband ready; she gave him a wallet and gave him a spindle.

"Here, take this," said she, "and give it to her. By this she will know that you are my husband."

She showed him the way. Yemilyan started; he went beyond the city, and he saw some bowmen drilling. Yemilyan stopped and watched them. After the bowmen had practised, they sat down to rest. Yemilyan approached them and asked: —

"Do you know, my brethren, where I must go, not knowing where, to get something, not knowing what?"

The bowmen listened to what he had to say, and they were filled with wonder.

"Who sent you to find out?" they inquired.

"The voyevode," said he.

"No," said they, "we cannot help you."

After Yemilyan had sat a little while, he proceeded on his way.

He went and he went, and at last he came to a forest. In the forest lived the old babushka.

The old woman was sitting in a cottage — the ancient peasant mother — she was spinning flax — and she was weeping. When the old woman saw Yemilyan, she cried out to him: —

"What have you come for?"

Yemilyan gave her the distaff, and told her his wife had sent it to her. And Yemilyan began to tell her all

about his life, how he had married the girl, how he had gone to the city to live, how he had been taken as a dvornik, how he had served the voyevode, how he had built the cathedral and made the river with the ships, and how now the voyevode had commanded him to go somewhere, not knowing where, to get something, he knew not what.

The old woman listened to him and ceased to weep. She began to mutter to herself.

"That is very good," said she, "but sit down, little son, and eat."

Yemilyan ate his fill, and the old woman began to talk with him.

"Here is a little ball," said she; "roll it before you and follow it, wherever it may roll. You will have to go far, even to the sea. When you reach the sea, you will find there a great city. When you enter the city, ask for a night's lodgings at the last house. There you will find what you need."

"But how shall I know it, babushka?"

"Well, when you see what men obey sooner than father and mother, that is what you want; seize on it and take it with you. You will take it to the voyevode, but he will say to you that you have not brought the thing that was required, and then do you say to him: 'Well, if it is not what is wanted it must be broken;' then hit the thing a blow and take it down to the river, break it, and fling it into the water, and then you will recover your wife."

Yemilyan bade the old woman good-by, rolled the little ball ahead of him; it rolled and it rolled, and it took him to the sea, and by the sea was a great city. At the border of the city was a large house. Yemilyan there demanded hospitality for the night; it was granted, and he went to bed. He woke early in the morning and listened; the father was getting up, he called his son and sent him to split kindlings. But the son would not heed; "It is too early as yet," said he, "I shall have time enough." Yemilyan heard the mother get down from the oven and say:—

"Go, little son, your father's bones pain him; would you make him go?"

"There 's plenty of time."

The son made a smacking noise with his lips, and dropped off to sleep again. As soon as he had fallen asleep there was a noise like thunder, and a loud crash in the street. The son leaped down, put on his clothes, and ran down into the street. Yemilyan also jumped down and followed him to see what the son obeyed better than his parents. Yemilyan ran down and saw a man going along the street, carrying a round object and beating on it with sticks, and it rumbled, and the son listened to it. Yemilyan ran closer and examined the object, and saw that it was round like a small tub, and both ends were covered with skin. And he insisted on knowing what it was called.

"A drum," they told him.

Yemilyan was amazed, and asked them to give it to him. They refused to give it to him. So Yemilyan ceased to ask for it, but he walked along following it. He walked all that day, and when the man that had it lay down to sleep, Yemilyan seized his drum and ran off with it.

He ran and he ran, and at last came back to his own city. He expected to see his wife at home, but she was not there.

On the next day they had brought her to the voyevode. Yemilyan went to the voyevode's, and bade them announce him in these words: —

"Here! the man who went he knew not where, has come back, bringing he knows not what."

The voyevode bade Yemilyan to return the next day.

Yemilyan then ordered them to say to the voyevode: —

"I," said he, "have come to-day. I have brought what he bade me bring; let the voyevode come to me or I will come to him."

The voyevode replied: —

"Where did you go?" he asked.

"I don't know," said he.

"And what did you bring with you?"

Yemilyan was about to show it to him, but the voyevode refused to look at it: —

"It 's nothing," said he.

"Yes, it 's nothing," said Yemilyan; "but then one must beat on it, and the devil is in it."

Yemilyan came with the drum and beat on it.

As soon as he began to beat on it, all the voyevode's army came and joined Yemilyan. They saluted him and waited till he should give the word of command.

The voyevode began to shout to his bowmen from the window of his palace, forbidding them to follow Yemilyan. They refused to obey him, and followed Yemilyan. The voyevode perceived this, and ordered them to restore his wife to Yemilyan, and then asked him to give him the drum.

"I cannot," said Yemilyan. "I must beat it," said he, "and throw the scrapings into the river."

Yemilyan went with the drum to the river, and the bowmen followed him. Yemilyan beat the drum by the river, broke it into pieces, and flung them into the river. And all the bowmen scattered in all directions. But Yemilyan took his wife and brought her home. And from that time forth the voyevode ceased to bother him, and he lived long and happily ever after.[1]

[1] This quaint little parable, in which military glory is symbolized as an empty drum, ends with a variation of the popular greeting: *zhit'*, *pozhivat'*, *dobro nazhivat'*, *a khudo prozhivat'*, in which the verb *zhit'*, to live, appears in various guises. It is twice printed in the latest edition of Count Tolstoï's works: in vol. xii. under the title, *Skazka. Iz narodnuikh skazok, sozdannuikh na Volgé f otdalennuiya ot nas vremena.* "Tale: From the Folk Tales originating on the Volga in Far-distant Times."

THE END